EXHIBITION NUMBER.

SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE.

VOL. XIII. MAY, 1893. No. 5.

AN UNPUBLISHED AUTOGRAPH NARRATIVE BY WASHINGTON.

IT was the purpose of Colonel David Humphreys to write the life of Washington. As a member of his military staff from 1780 until the close of the war, and for some years an inmate of his household at Mount Vernon and in New York, Colonel Humphreys would have found the task an easy and congenial one, and undertaken, as it undoubtedly was to be, immediately upon Washington's death, the supply of material from living and active sources would have been abundant. But Colonel Humphreys was evidently determined not to rely upon hearsay or secondary testimony, however undoubted, and it would seem, that at his request Washington prepared the narrative, the connected part of which is here given. This narrative is in autograph, covering some ten pages of manuscript of folio size, and is in part responsive to detailed and numbered questions put by Colonel Humphreys. These questions, it is believed, are not now accessible; indeed, it is doubtful if they exist to-day. Their purport can only be inferred from the answers, which are in almost every instance very short, and often give but the slightest clue to the inquiry. The account of his Indian campaigns is, however, a connected story, and the manuscript was evidently carefully revised by Washington before he submitted it to Colonel Humphreys. There are frequent interlineations and erasures, and the words "I" and "me," in nearly every instance where they occur, are changed to the initials "G. W.," by the revision.*

In 1829, eleven years after Colonel Humphreys's death, the original paper was given by Mrs. Humphreys to my grandfather, the late John Pickering, Colonel Humphreys's executor, in the custody of whose family it has since then remained. It was recently read, by permission, before the Massachusetts Historical Society, but it has never been printed, nor, it is believed, have any extracts from it ever been given to the public. Certain incidents described in it, such as the instance of grave peril in which Washington's life was placed in one of the engagements, as well as his frank estimate of General Braddock's character and abilities, are of original historical interest, as being heretofore unknown, even to the student; but the permanent value of the narrative is in its authoritative source, and the unchanged form in which it has been transmitted.

It would seem that the request of Washington contained in the last clause, in regard to the final disposition of the original paper, may with propriety be disregarded, in view of the lapse of time, the character of the narrative, and the value of its historical material; and it is not believed that a confidence, which every American would tenderly respect, is violated by its publication.

HENRY G. PICKERING.

* See the passage reproduced in facsimile, page 536.

Copyright, 1893, by Charles Scribner's Sons. All rights reserved.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE BRADDOCK CAMPAIGN.

From the Manuscript of Washington.

By the indefatigable industry of the Lieutenant Colonel and the officers who seconded his measures, the Regiment was in great forwardness at Alexandria (the place of general rendezvous) early in the spring of 1754, and without waiting till the whole should be completed, or for a detachment from the independent companies of regulars in the southern provinces (which had been required by the Executive of Virginia for this service), or for troops which were raising in North Carolina and destined in conjunction to oppose the incroachment of the French at our Western frontiers—He began his march in the month of May in order to open the road, and this he had to do almost the whole distance from Winchester (in the County of Frederick not more than eighty miles from Alexandria to the Ohio)—deposits &c.—and for the especiall purpose of siezing, if possible, before the French should arrive at it, the important post at the conflux of the Alligany and Monongahela; with the advantages of which he was struck the preceding year; and earnestly advised the securing of with militia, or some other temporary force. But notwithstanding all his exertions, the new and uncommon difficulties he had to encounter (made more intolerable by incessant rains and waters of which he had many to cross), he had but just ascended the Laurel Hill 50 m. short of his object after a march of 230 miles from Alex. when he received information from his scouts that the French had in force siezed the post he was pushing to obtain; having descended from Presque Isle by the rivers Lebeouf and Alligany to this place by water with artillery &c. &c. The object of his precipitate advance being thus defeated, the detachment of regulars which had arrived at Alexandria by water, and under his orders being far in his rear and no account of the troops from North Carolina, it was thought advisable to fall back a few miles, to a place known by the name of the Great Meadows, abounding in forage, more convenient for the purpose of forming a magazine and bringing up the rear, and to advance from (if we should ever be in force to do it) to the attack of the post which the enemy now occupied, and had called Du-Quesne. At this place, some days after, we were joined by the above detachment of regulars, consisting (before they were reduced on the march by desertion, sickness, &c.) of a Captain McKay, a brave and worthy officer, three subalterns and 100 rank and file. But previous to this junction the French sent a detachment to reconnoitre our lines and to obtain intelligence of our strength and position; notice of which being given by the scouts, G. W. marched at the head of a party, attacked, killed 9 or 10, and captured 20 odd. This, as soon as the enemy had assembled their Indian allies, brought their whole force upon him, consisting, according to their own, compared with the best acct. that could be obtained from others, of about 1500 men. His force consisted of the detachment above mentioned, also between two & 300 Virginians; for the few Indians which till now had attended him, and who by reconnoitering the enemy in their march had got terrified at their numbers and resolved to retreat as they advised us to do also, but which was impracticable without abandoning our stores, baggage &c. as the horses which had brought them to this place, and returned for provision, had left us previous to the attack. About 9 o'clock on the 3rd of July the enemy advanced with shouts and dismal Indian yells to our entrenchments, but was opposed by so warm, spirited, and constant a fire, that to force the works in that way was abandoned by them. They then, from every little rising, tree, stump, stone, and bush kept up a constant galding fire upon us; which was returned in the best manner we could

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

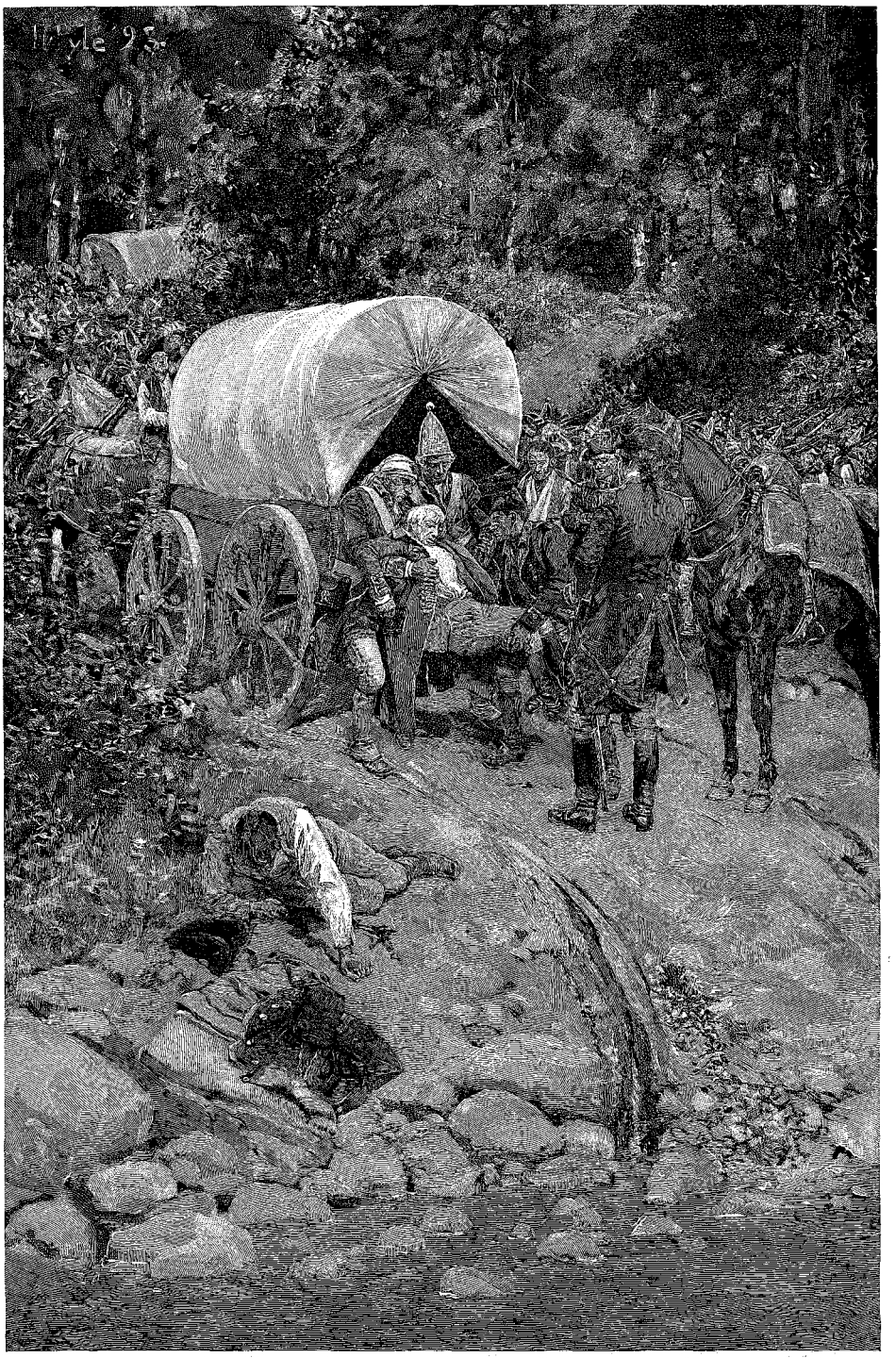
DRAWN BY HOWARD PYLE. ENGRAVED BY F. S. KING.

"Seeing no enemy, and themselves falling every moment from the fire."—Page 534.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

till late in the afternoon when their fell the most tremendous rain that can be conceived, filled our trenches with water, wet, not only the ammunition in the cartoosh boxes and fire locks, but that which was in a small temporary stockade in the middle of the entrenchment called Fort Necessity erected for the sole purpose of its security, and that of the few stores we had; and left us with nothing but a few (for all were not provided with them) bayonets for defense. In this situation and no prospect of bettering it, terms of capitulation were offered to us by the French which with some alterations that were insisted upon were the more readily acceded to, as we had no salt provisions, and but indifferently supplied with fresh, which from the heat of the weather would not keep; and because a full third of our numbers, officers as well as privates were, by this time, killed or wounded. The next morning we marched out with the honors of war, but were soon plundered, contrary to the articles of capitulation, of great part of our baggage by the Savages. Our sick and wounded were left with a detachment under the care and command of the worthy Doctr. Craik (for he was not only Surgeon to the Regiment, but a Lieutenant therein) with such necessaries as we could extend and the remains of the Regim?, and the detachment of regulars, took up their line for the interior country. And at Winchester met 2 companies from North Carolina on their march to join them. These being fresh, and properly provided, were ordered to proceed to Will's Creek and establish a post (since called Fort Cumberland) for the purpose of covering the frontiers. Where they were joined by a company from Maryland which, about this time, had been raized — Captn. McKay with his detachment remd. at Winchester; and the Virginia Regiment proceeded to Alexandria in order to recruit, and get supplied with cloathing and necessarys of which they stood much in need. In this manner the winter was employed, when advice was received of the force destined for this service under the orders of G. W. and the arrival of Sir John St. Clair the Q. Master Genl. with some new arrangement of rank by which no officer who did not *immediately* derive his comn. from the *King* could command one *who did.* This was too degrading for G. W. to submit to; accordingly, he resigned his military employment; determining to serve the next campaign as a volunteer; but upon the arrival of Genl. Braddock he was very particularly noticed by that General, taken into his family as an extra Aid, offered a Captain's commission by *brevet* (which was the highest grade he had it in his power to bestow) and had the compliment of several blank Ensigncies given him to dispose of to the Young Gentlemen of his acqe. to supply the vacancies in the 44 and 48 Regts. which had arrived from Ireland. In this capacity he commenced his second campaign, and used every proper occasion till he was taken sick and left behind in the vicinity of Fort Cumberland, to impress the Genl. and the principal officers around him, with the necessity of opposing the nature of his defense to the mode of attack which more than probably he would experience from the Canadian French and their Indians on his march through the mountains and covered country, but so prepossessed were they in favor of *regularity & discipline* and in such absolute contempt were *those people held,* that the admonition was suggested in vain. About the middle of June this armament, consisting of the two Regiments from Ireland some independent companies and the provincial troops of Virginia, Maryland and North Carolina, began to move from Fort Cumberland, whither they had assembled. After several days' march, and difficulties to which they had never been accustomed in regular service in Champaign Countries, and of which they seemed to have had very little idea, the Genl. resolved to divide his force, and at the head of the first division which was composed of the flower of his army, to advance, and leave Col. Dunbar with the second division and the heavy baggage and stores, to follow after. By so doing, the first division approached the Monongahela 10 miles short of Fort Duquesne the 8th of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



DRAWN BY HOWARD PYLE. ENGRAVED BY C. W. CHADWICK.

The Death of Braddock.

"G. W. placed the General in a small covered cart."—Page 534.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

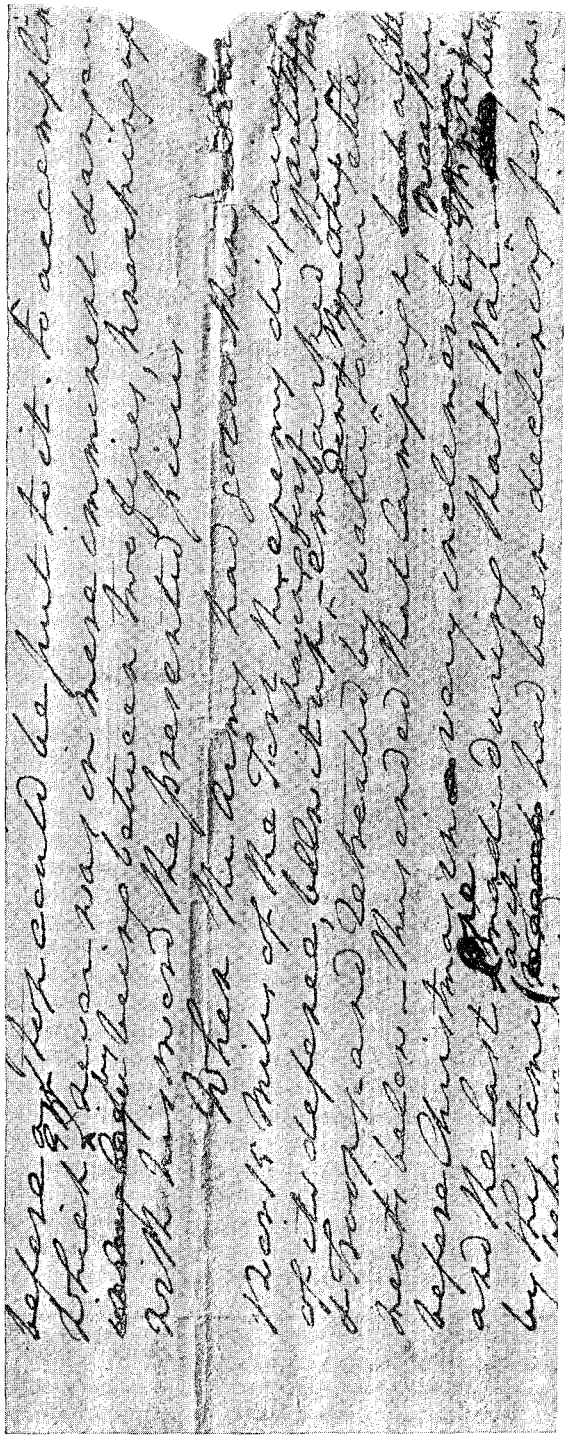
July, at which time and place having so far recovered from a severe fever and delerium from which he had been rescued by James' powder, administered by the positive order of the Genl. as to travel in a covered Waggon, he joined him and the next day tho' much reduced and very weak mounted his horse on cushions, and attended as one of his Aids. About 10 o'clock on the 9th, after the van had crossed the Monongahela the *second time*, to avoid an ugly defile (the season being very dry and waters low) and the rear yet in the river the front was attacked; and by the unusual hallooing and whooping of the enemy, whom they could not see, were so disconcerted and confused as soon to fall into irretrievable disorder. The rear was forced forward to support them, but seeing no enemy, and themselves falling every moment from the fire, a general panic took place among the troops, from which no exertions of the officers could recover them. In the early part of the action some of the Irregulars (as they were called) *without directions* advanced to the right in loose order, to attack; but this, *unhappily* from the unusual appearance of the movement being mistaken for cowardace and a running away, was discountenanced—and before it was *too late*, and the confusion became general, an offer was made by G. W. to head the Provincials and engage the enemy in their own way; but the propriety of it was not seen into until it was too late for execution. After this, many attempts were made to dislodge the enemy from an eminence on the right, but they all proved ineffectual, and fatal to the officers, who by great exertions and good examples endeavored to accomplish it. In one of these the Genl. received the wound of which he died; but previous to it, had several horses killed and disabled under him. Captns. Orme and Morris (his two Aids de camp having received wounds which rendered them unable to attend, G. W. remained the sole Aid through the day, to the Genl.; he also had one horse killed and two wounded under him, a ball through his hat, and several through his clothes, but escaped unhurt. Sir Peter Halkel (secd. in command) being early killed, Lieut. Colo. Burton and Sir John St. Clair (who had the rank of Lt. Colo. in the army) being badly wounded, Lieut. Colo. Gage (afterwards Gen. Gage) having received a contussion. No person knowing in the disordered state things were who the surviving senior officer was, and the troops by degrees going off in confusion; without a ray of hope left of further opposition from those that remained, G. W. placed the Genl. in a small covered Cart, which carried some of his most essential equipage, and in the best order he could, with the last troops (who only continued to be fired at) brought him over the *first* ford of the Monongahela; where they were formed in the best order circumstances would admit on a piece of rising ground; After wch., by the Genl.'s order, he rode forward to halt those which had been earlier in the retreat. Accordingly, after crossing the Monongahela the *second time* and ascending the heights, he found Lieut. Colo. Gage engaged in this business, to whom he delivered the Genl.'s order and then returned to report the situation he found them in. When he was again requested by the Genl. whom he met coming on in his litter with the first halted troops, to proceed (it then being after sundown) to the second division under the command of Colo. Dunbar, to make arrangements for covering the retreat, and forwarding on provisions and refreshments to the retreating and wounded soldiers. To accomplish this, for the second division was 40 odd miles in the rear, it took up the whole night and part of the next morning—which from the weak state in which he was, and the fatigues, and anxiety of the last 24 hours, rendered him in a manner wholly unfit for the execution of the duty he was sent upon when he arrived at Dunbar's camp. To the best of his power however, he discharged it, and remained with the second division till the other joined it. The shocking scenes which presented themselves in this night's march are not to be described — the dead—the dying—the groans—lamentations and crys along the road of the wounded for help (for those under the latter de-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

scriptions endeavored from the first commencement of the action or rather confusion to escape to ye second division) were enough to pierce a heart of adamant. The gloom and horror of which was not a little encreased by the impervious darkness occasioned by the close shade of thick woods which in places rendered it impossible for the two guides which attended to know when they were in or out of the track, but by groping on the ground with their hands. Happy was it for him and the remains of the first division that they left such a quantity of valuable and enticing baggage on the field as to occasion a scramble and contention in the seizure and distribution of it among the enemy; for had a pursuit taken place, by passing the defile which we had avoided, and they had got into our rear, the whole, except a few woodsmen would have fallen victims to the merciless savages. Of about 12 or 13 hundred which were in this action, eight or 9 hundred were either killed or wounded, among whom a large proportion of brave and valuable officers were included. The folly and consequence of opposing compact bodies to the sparse manner of Indian fighting in woods, which had in a manner been predicted, was now so clearly verified that from henceforward another mode obtained in all future operations. As soon as the two divisions united, the whole retreated towards Fort Cumberland; and at an incampment near the Great Meadows the brave but unfortunate Genl. Braddock breathed his last. He was interred with the honors of war, and as it was left to G. W. to see this performed, and to mark out the spot for the reception of his remains—to guard against a savage triumph, if the place should be discovered—they were deposited in the Road over which the army wagons &c. passed to hide every trace by which the entombment could be discovered.

Thus died a man whose good and bad qualities were intimately blended. He was brave even to a fault and in regular service would have done honor to his profession. His attachments were warm—his enmities were strong—and having no disguise about him, both appeared in full force. He was generous and disinterested—but plain and blunt in his manner even to rudeness. After this event the troops continued their march forward and soon arrived at Fort Cumberland without molestation, all except the pvls. immediately resolved to proceed to Philadelphia; by which means the frontiers of *that* state but *more especially* those of Virginia and Maryland, were laid *entirely* open by the *very avenue* which had been prepared. Of the direful consequences of this measure, G. W., in a visit which he immediately made to Williamsburgh, a visit that brought the Governor and Council of Virginia acquainted. But in vain did they remonstrate against the march of the B. troops to that place to the officer commanding them. They thus proceeded to augment their own, the command of which under a very enlarged and dignified commission, to command *all* the troops now raised, or to be raised in the Colony, was given to him with very extensive powers, and blank commissions to appoint all new officers. About this time also or soon after it, the discontents and clamours of the Provincial Officers and the remonstrance of G. W. in person to Genl. Shirley, the then Commander in Chief of the British forces in America, and through the Governor and Council to the King's Minister, with respect to the degrading situation in which they were placed, a new arrangement took place by the King's order, by which every Provincial officer was to rank according to the commission he bore, but to be Junior to those of the same grade in the established course. As G. W. foresaw, so it happened, the frontiers were continually harassed—but not having force enough to carry the war to the gates of Duquesne, he could do no more than distribute the troops along the frontiers in stockaded forts; more with a view to quiet the fears of the inhabitants than from any expectation of giving security on so extensive a line to the settlements. During this interval in one of his tours along the frontier posts, he narrowly escaped according to the account afterwards given by some of our people who

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Facsimile from a Passage of Washington's Narrative.—Page 537.

were prisoners with them, and eye witnesses at the time of the [undecipherable] falling by an Indian party who had waylaid (for another purpose) the communication along which with a small party of horse only, he was passing — the road in this place formed a curve, and the prey they were in weight for being expected at the reverse part, the Captn. of the party had gone across to observe the number and manner of their movement &c. in order that he might make his disposition accordingly, leaving orders for the party not to take notice of any passengers the other way till he returned to them— in the meantime, in the opposite direction I passed and escaped almost certain destruction, for the weather was raining and the few carbines unfit for use if we had escaped the first fire. This happened near Fort Vass. Never ceasing, in the meantime, in his attempts to demonstrate to the Legislature of Virginia — to Lord Louden &c.—that the only means of preventing the devastations to which the middle states were exposed, was to remove the cause. But the war by this time raging in another quarter of the continent, all applications were unheeded till the year 1758, when an expedition against Fort Duquesne was concerted and undertaken under the conduct of Genl. Forbes; who though a brave and good officer, was so much debilitated by bad health, and so illy supplied with the means to carry on the expedition, that it was November before the troops got to Loyalhanning fifty or

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

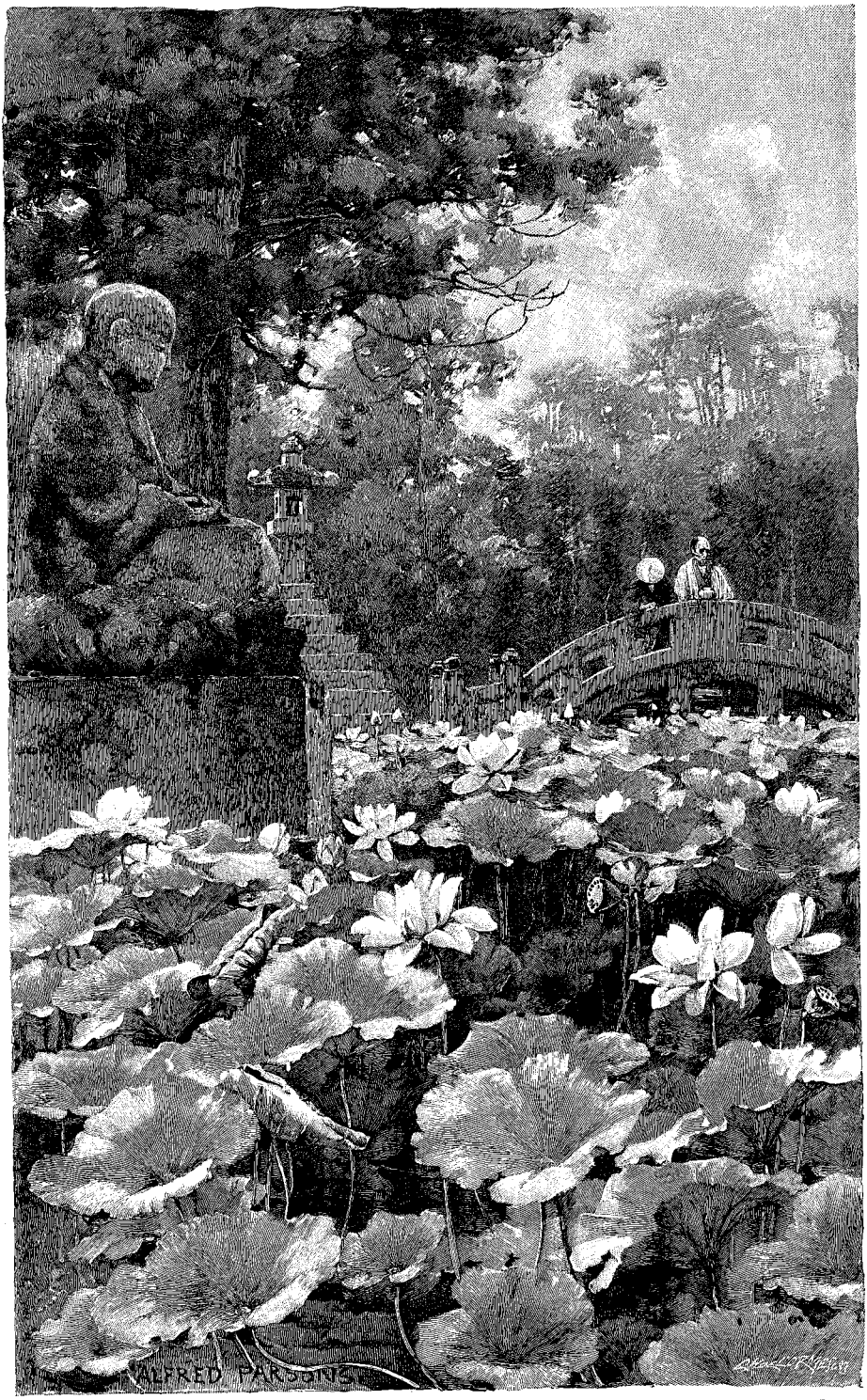
sixty miles short of DuQuesne, and even then was on the very point of abandoning the exhibition when some seasonable supplies arriving, the army was formed into three brigades—took up its march — and moved forward; the brigade commanded by G. W. being the leading one. Previous to this, and during the time the army lay at Loyalhanning, a circumstance occurred which involved the life of G. W. in as much jeopardy as it had ever been before or since.

The enemy sent out a large detachment to reconnoitre our camp, and to ascertain our strength; in consequence of intelligence that they were within two miles of the camp a party commanded by Lieut. Colo. Mercer, of the Virginia Line (a gallant and good officer) was sent to dislodge them, between whom a severe conflict and hot firing ensued, which lasting some time and appearing to approach the camp, it was conceived that our party was yielding the ground, upon which G. W. with permission of the Genl. called (per dispatch) for volunteers and immediately marched at their head, to sustain, as was conjectured, the retireing troops. Led on by the firing till he came within less than half a mile, and it ceasing, he detached scouts to investigate the cause, and to communicate his approach to his friend Colo. Mercer, advancing slowly in the meantime. But it being near dusk, and the intelligence not having been fully dissiminated among Colo. Mercer's corps, and they taking us for the enemy who had retreated approaching in another direction, commenced a heavy fire upon the relieving party which drew fire in return in spite of all the exertions of the officers, one of whom, and several privates were killed and many wounded before a stop could be put to it, to accomplish which G. W. never was in more imminent danger, by being between two fires, knocking up with his sword the presented pieces.

When the army had got within about twelve or fifteen miles of the Fort the enemy dispairing of its defense, blew it up, having first embarked their artilery, stores and Troops, and retreated by water down the Ohio, to their settlements below. Thus ended that Campaign, a little before Christmas, in very inclement weather; and the last one made during that War by G. W. whose health by this time (as it had been declining for many months before, occasioned by an inveterate disorder in his bowels) became so precarious as to induce him (having seen quiet restored by this event to the frontiers of his own country, which was the principal inducement to his taking arms) to resign his military appointments. The sollicitation of the troops which he commanded to continue—their affectionate farewell address to him when they found the situation of his health and other circumstances would not allow it, affected him exceedingly, and in grateful sensibility he expressed the warmth of his attachment to them on that, and his inclination to serve them on every other future occasion.

The information given in these sheets, though related from memory, is, it is believed to be depended upon. It is hastily and incorrectly related—but not so much for these reasons, as some others, it is earnestly requested that after Colo. Humphreys has extracted what he shall judge necessary, and given it in his own language, that the *whole* of what is here contained may be returned to G. W., or committed to the flames—some of the enumerations are trifling; and perhaps more important circumstances omitted; but just as they occurred to the memory, they were committed. If there are any grains among them, Colo. H. can easily seperate them from the chaff.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



DRAWN BY ALFRED PARSONS. ENGRAVED BY GEORGE DEL'ORME.

BUDDHA'S FLOWERS.

[*Contributed by the artist to the Exhibition Number of Scribner's Magazine.*]

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE COUNTRY PRINTER.

By W. D. Howells.

The Illustrations by A. B. Frost.

I.

MY earliest memories, or those which I can make sure are not the sort of early hearsay that we mistake for remembrance later in life, concern a country newspaper, or rather a country printing-office. The office was in my childish consciousness some years before the paper was; the compositors rhythmically swaying before their cases of type; the pressman flinging himself back on the bar that made the impression, with a swirl of his long hair; the apprentice rolling the forms, and the foreman bending over the imposing-stone, were familiar to me when I could not grasp the notion of any effect from their labors. In due time I came to know all about it, and to understand that these activities went to the making of the Whig newspaper which my father edited to the confusion of the Locofocos, and in the especial interest of Henry Clay; I myself supported this leader so vigorously for the presidency in my seventh year, that it was long before I could realize that the election of 1844 had resulted in his defeat. My father had already been a printer for a good many years, and some time in the early thirties he had led a literary forlorn hope, in a West Virginian town, with a monthly magazine, which he printed himself and edited with the help of his sister. As long as he remained in business he remained a country editor and a country printer; he began to study medicine when he was a young man, but he abandoned it for the calling of his life without regret, and though with his speculative and inventive temperament he was tempted to experiment in other things, I do not think he would ever have lastingly forsaken his newspaper for them. In fact, the art of printing was in our blood; it never brought us great honor or profit; and we were always planning and dreaming to get out of it, or get it out of us; but we are all in some sort bound up with it still. To me it is now so endeared by the associations of childhood, that I cannot breathe the familiar odor of types and presses without emotion; and I should not be surprised if I found myself trying to cast a halo of romance about the old-fashioned country office, in what I shall have to say of it here.

II.

Our first newspaper was published in southwestern Ohio, but after a series of varying fortunes, which I need not dwell upon, we found ourselves in possession of an office in the northeastern corner of the State, where the prevalent political feeling promised a prosperity to one of my father's anti-slavery opin-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ions which he had never yet enjoyed. He had no money, but in those days it was an easy matter to get an interest in a country paper on credit, and we all went gladly to work to help him pay for the share that he acquired in one by this means. An office which gave a fair enough living, as living was then, could be bought for twelve or fifteen hundred dollars; but this was an uncommonly good office, and I suppose the half of it which my father took was worth one sum or the other. Afterward, within a few months, when it was arranged to remove the paper from the village where it had always been published to the county-seat, a sort of joint-stock company was formed, and the value of his moiety increased so much, nominally at least, that he was nearly ten years paying for it. By this time I was long out of the story, but at the beginning I was very vividly in it, and before the world began to call me

"Every sort of farm produce was legal tender at the printing-office." —Page 542.

with that voice which the heart of youth cannot resist, it was very interesting; I felt its charm then, and now, as I turn back to it, I feel its charm again, though it was always a story of steady work, if not hard work.

The county-seat, where it had been judged best to transfer the paper lest some other paper of like politics should be established there, was a village of only six or seven hundred inhabitants. But, as the United States Senator who was one of its citizens used to say, it was "a place of great political privileges." The dauntless man who represented the district in the House for twenty years, and who had fought the anti-slavery battle from the first, was his fellow-villager, and more than compeer in distinction; and besides these, there was nearly always a State Senator or Representative among us. The county officers, of course, lived at the county-seat, and the leading lawyers, who were the leading politicians, made their homes in the shadow of the court-house, where one of them was presently elected to preside as Judge of the Common Pleas. In politics, the county was already overwhelmingly Freesoil, as the forerunner of the Republican party was then called; the Whigs had hardly gathered themselves together since the defeat of General Scott for the presidency; the Democrats, though dominant in State and Nation, and faithful to slavery at every election, did not greatly outnumber among us the zealots called Comeouters, who would not vote at all under a constitution recognizing the right of men to own men. Our paper was Freesoil, and its field was large among that vast majority of the people who believed that slavery would finally perish if kept out of the territories, and confined to the old Slave States. With the removal of the press to the county-seat there was a hope that this field could be widened, till every Freesoil voter became a subscriber. It did not fall out so; even of those who subscribed in the ardor of their political sympathies, many never paid; but our list was nevertheless handsomely increased, and numbered fifteen or sixteen hundred. I do not know how it may be now, but then most country papers had a list of four or five hundred subscribers; a few had

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DRAWN BY A. B. FROST.

"Perhaps because my head was so hot with it, my feet were always very cold."—Page 543.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a thousand, a very few twelve hundred, and these were fairly decimated by delinquents. We were so flown with hope that I remember there was serious talk of risking the loss of the delinquents on our list by exacting payment in advance; but the measure was thought too bold, and we compromised by demanding two dollars a year for the paper, and taking a dollar and a half if paid in advance. Twenty-five years later my brother, who had followed my father in the business, discovered that a man who never meant to pay for his paper would as lief owe two dollars a year for it as any less sum, and he at last risked the loss of the delinquents by requiring advance payment; it was an heroic venture, but it was perhaps time to make it.

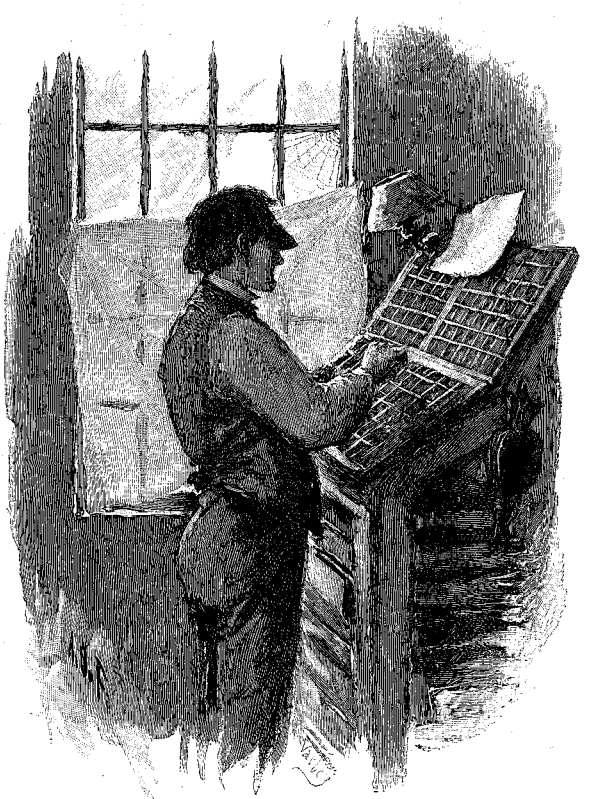
"His children gathered about the same lamp with their books or their jokes." —Page 548.

The people of the county were mostly farmers, and of these nearly all were dairymen. The few manufactures were on a small scale, except perhaps the making of oars, which were shipped all over the world from the heart of the primeval forests densely wooding the vast levels of the region. The portable steam saw-mills dropped down on the borders of the woods have long since eaten their way through and through them, and devoured every stick of timber in most places, and drunk up the water-courses that the woods once kept full; but at that time half the land was in the shadow of those mighty poplars and hickories, elms and chestnuts, ashes and hemlocks; and the meadows that pastured the herds of red cattle were dotted with stumps as thick as harvest stubble. Now there are not even stumps; the woods are gone, and the water-courses are torrents in spring and beds of dry clay in summer. The meadows themselves have vanished, for it has been found that the strong yellow soil will produce more in grain than in milk. There is more money in the hands of the farmers there, though there is still so little that by any city scale it would seem comically little, pathetically little; but forty years ago there was so much less that fifty dollars seldom passed through a farmer's hands in a year. Payment was made in kind rather than in coin, and every sort of farm produce was legal tender at the printing-office. Wood was welcome in any quantity, for the huge box-stove consumed it with inappeasable voracity, and then did not heat the wide low room which was at once editorial-room, composing-room, and press-room. Perhaps this was not so much the fault of the stove as of the building; in that cold lake-shore country the people dwelt in wooden structures almost as thin and flimsy as tents; and often in the first winter of our sojourn, the type froze solid with the water which the compositor put on it when he wished to distribute his case; the inking roll-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

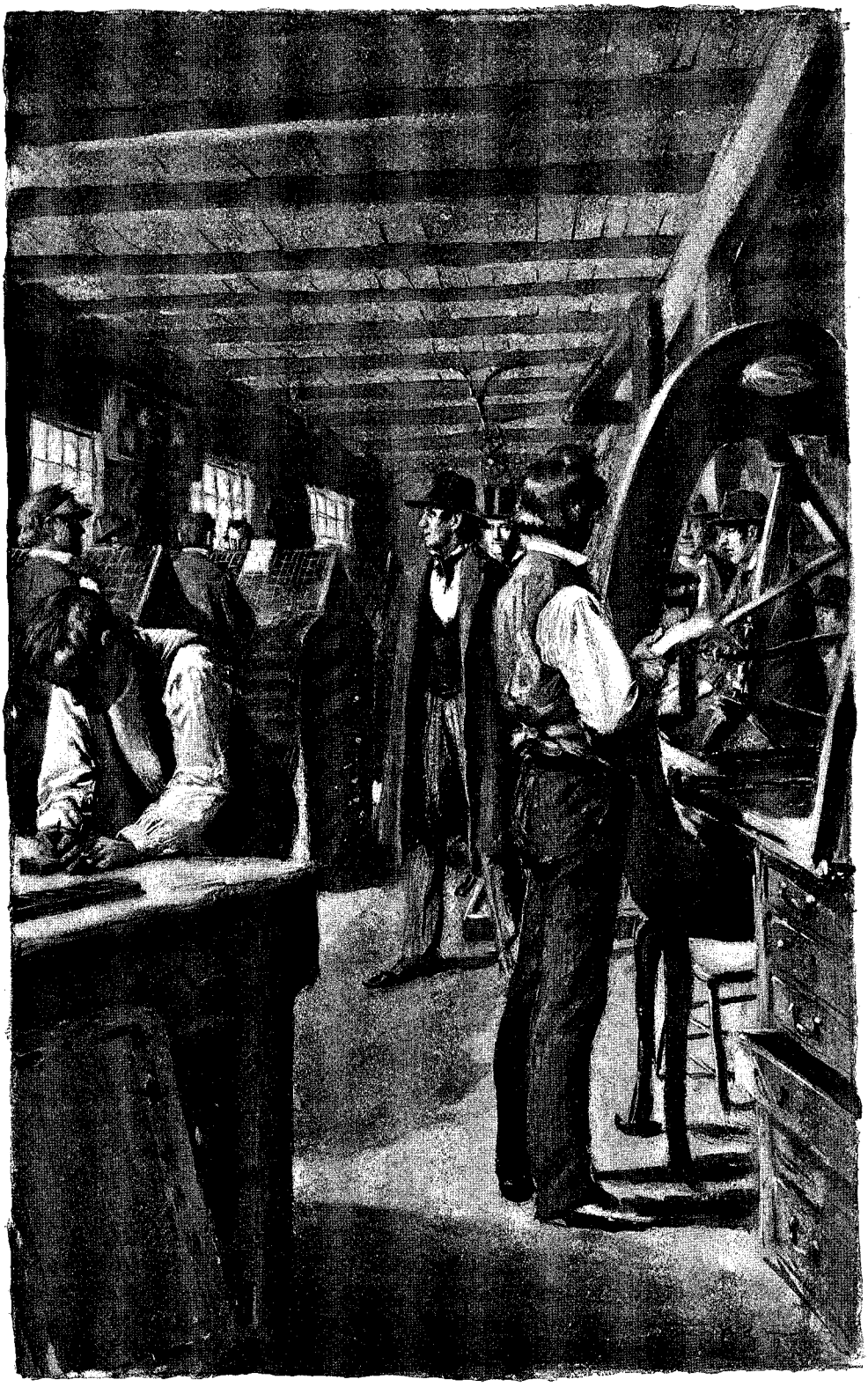
ers had to be thawed before they could be used on the press, and if the current of the editor's soul had not been the most genial that ever flowed in this rough world, it must have been congealed at its source. The cases of type had to be placed very near the windows so as to get all the light there was, and they got all the cold there was, too. From time to time, the compositor's fingers became so stiff that blowing on them would not avail; he passed the time in excursions between his stand and the stove; in very cold weather, he practised the device of warming his whole case of types by the fire, and when it lost heat, warming it again. The man at the press-wheel was then the enviable man; those who handled the chill damp sheets of paper were no more fortunate than the compositors.

The first floor of our office-building was used by a sash and blind factory; there was a machine-shop somewhere in it, and a mill for sawing out shingles; and it was better fitted to the exercise of these robust industries than to the requirements of our more delicate craft. Later, we had a more comfortable place, in a new wooden "business block," and for several years before I left it, the office was domiciled in an old dwelling-house, which we bought, and which we used without much change. It could never have been a very luxurious dwelling, and my associations with it are of a wintry cold, scarcely less polar than that we were inured to elsewhere. In fact, the climate of that region is rough and fierce; and the lake winds have a malice sharper than the saltest gales of the North Shore of Massachusetts. I know that there were lovely summers and lovelier autumns in my time there, full of sunsets of a strange, wild, melancholy splendor, I suppose from some atmospheric influence of the lake; but I think chiefly of the winters, so awful to us after the mild seasons of southern Ohio; the frosts of ten and twenty below; the village streets and the country roads drowned in snow, the consumptives in the thin houses, and the "slipin'," as the sleighing was called, that lasted from December to April with hardly a break. At first our family was housed on a farm a little way out, because there was no tenement to be had in the village, and my father and I used to walk to and from the office together in the morning and evening. I had taught myself to read Spanish, in my passion for Don Quixote, and I was then, at the age of fifteen, preparing to write a life of Cervantes. This scheme occupied me a good deal in those bleak walks, and perhaps because my head was so hot with it, my feet were always very cold; but my father assured me that they would get warm as soon as my boots froze. If I have never yet written that life of Cervantes, on the other hand I have never been quite able



"Pecking at the type in his case, 'Like an old hen pickin' up millet.'"—P. 548.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



DRAWN BY A. B. FROST.

"They liked to stand with their backs to our stove, and challenge opinion concerning Holmes and Poe."—Page 548.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to make it clear to myself why my feet should have got warm when my boots froze.

III.

It may have been only a theory of his; it may have been a joke. He had a great many theories and a great many jokes, and together these always kept life interesting and sunshiny to him. With his serene temperament and his happy doubt of disaster in any form, he was singularly well fitted to encounter the hardships of a country editor's lot. But for the moment, and for what now seems a long time after the removal of our paper to the county-seat, these seemed to have vanished. The printing-office was the centre of civic and social interest; it was frequented by visitors at all times, and on publication-day it was a scene of gayety that looks a little incredible in the retrospect. The place was as bare and rude as a printing-office seems always to be: the walls were splotched with ink and the floor littered with refuse newspapers; but lured by the novelty of the affair, and perhaps attracted by a natural curiosity to see what manner of strange men the printers were, the school-girls and young ladies of the village flocked in, and made it like a scene of comic opera, with their pretty dresses and faces, their eager chatter, and lively energy in folding the papers and addressing them to the subscribers, while our fellow-citizens of the place, like the bassos and baritones and tenors of the chorus, stood about and looked on with faintly sarcastic faces. It would not do to think now of what sorrow life and death have since wrought for all those happy young creatures, but I may recall without too much pathos the sensation when some citizen volunteer relaxed from his gravity far enough to relieve the regular mercenary at the crank of our huge power-press wheel, amid the applause of the whole company.

We were very vain of that press, which replaced the hand-press hitherto employed in printing the paper. This was of the style and make of the hand-press which superseded the Ramage press of Franklin's time; but it had been decided to signalize our new departure by the purchase of a power-press of modern contrivance, and of a speed fitted to meet the demands of a subscription list which might be indefinitely extended. A deputation of the leading politicians accompanied the editor to New York, where he went to choose the machine, and where he bought a second-hand Adams press of the earliest pattern and patent. I do not know, or at this date I would not undertake to say, just what principle governed his selection of this superannuated veteran; it seems not to have been very cheap; but possibly he had a prescience of the disabilities which were to task his ingenuity to the very last days of that press. Certainly no man of less gift and skill could have coped with its infirmities, and I am sure that he thoroughly enjoyed nursing it into such activity as carried it hysterically through those far-off publication days. It had obscure functional disorders of various kinds, so that it would from time to time cease to act, and would have to be doctored by the hour before it would go on. There was probably some organic trouble, too, for though it did not really fall to pieces on our hands, it showed itself incapable of profiting by several improvements which he invented, and could, no doubt, have successfully applied to the press if its constitution had not been undermined. It went with a crank set in a prodigious fly-wheel, which revolved at a great rate, till it came to the moment of making the impression, when the whole mechanism was seized with such a reluctance as nothing but an heroic effort at the crank could overcome. It finally made so great a draft upon our forces that it was decided to substitute steam for muscle in its operation, and we got a small engine, which could fully sympathize with the press in having seen better days. I do not know that there was anything the matter with the engine itself, but the boiler had some peculiarities which might well mystify the casual spectator. He could easily have satisfied himself that there was no danger of its blowing up, when he saw my brother feeding bran or corn-meal into its safety-valve, in order to fill up certain seams or fissures in it, which

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

caused it to give out at the moments of the greatest reluctance in the press. But still, he must have had his misgivings of latent danger of some other kind, though nothing ever actually happened of a hurtful character. To this day, I do not know just where those seams or fissures were, but I think they were in the boiler-head, and that it was therefore suffering from a kind of chronic fracture of the skull. What is certain is that, somehow, the engine and the press did always get us through publication day, and not only with safety but often with credit; so that not long ago, when I was at home, and my brother and I were looking over an old file of his paper, we found it much better printed than either of us expected; as well printed, in fact, as if it had been done on an old hand-press, instead of the steam-power press which it vaunted the use of. The wonder was that, under all the disadvantages, the paper was ever printed on our steam-power press at all; it was little short of miraculous that it was legibly printed, and altogether unaccountable that such impressions as we found in that file could come from it. Of course, they were not average impressions; they were the very best out of the whole edition, and were as creditable as the editorial make-up of the sheet.

IV.

On the first page was a poem, which I suppose I must have selected, and then a story, filling all the rest of the page, which my brother more probably chose; for he had a decided fancy in fiction, and had a scrap-book of inexhaustible riches, which he could draw upon indefinitely for old personal or family favorites. The next page was filled with selections of various kinds, and with original matter interesting to farmers. Then came a page of advertisements, and then the editorial page, where my father had given his opinions of the political questions which interested him, and which he thought it the duty of the country press to discuss, with sometimes essays in the field of religion and morals. There was a letter of two columns from Washington, contributed every week by the congressman who represented our district; and there was a letter from New York, written by a young lady of the county who was studying art under a master of portraiture then flourishing in the metropolis; if that is not stating it too largely for the renown of Thomas Hicks, as we see it in a vanishing perspective. The rest of this page, as well as the greater part of the next, was filled with general news, clipped from the daily papers, and partly condensed from them. There was also such local intelligence as offered itself, and communications on the affairs of village and county; but the editor did not welcome tidings of new barns and abnormal vegetation, or flatter hens to lay eggs of unusual size or with unusual frequency by undue public notice. All that order of minute neighborhood gossip which now makes the country paper a sort of open letter, was then unknown. He published marriages and deaths, and such obituary notices as the sorrowing fondness of friends prompted them to send him; and he introduced the custom of publishing births, after the English fashion, which the people took to kindly.

We had an ambition, even so remotely as that day, in the direction of the illustration which has since so flourished in the newspapers. Till then we had never gone farther in the art than to print a jubilant raccoon over the news of some Whig victory, or what was to the same purpose, an inverted cockerel in mockery of the beaten Democrats; but now we rose to the notion of illustrated journalism. We published a story with a woodcut in it, and we watched to see how that cut came out all through the edition with a pride that was perhaps too exhaustive; at any rate, we never tried another.

Of course, much of the political writing in the paper was controversial, and was carried on with editors of other opinions elsewhere in the county, for we had no rival in our own village. In this, which has always been the vice of American journalism, the country press was then fully as provincial as the great metropolitan journals are now. These may be more pitilessly personal in the conduct of their political discussions, and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a little more skilled in obloquy and insult; but the bickering went on in the country papers quite as idly and foolishly. I fancy nobody really cared for our quarrels, and that those who followed them were disgusted when they were more than merely wearied.

The space given to them might better have been given even to original poetry. This was sometimes accepted, but was not invited; though our sixth page commonly began with a copy of verse of some kind. Then came more prose selections, but never at any time accounts of murder or violent crimes, which the editor abominated in themselves and believed thoroughly corrupting. Advertisements of various kinds filled out the sheet, which was simple and quiet in typography, wholly without the handbill display which now renders nearly all newspapers repulsive to the eye. I am rather proud, in my quality of printer, that this was a style which I established; and we maintained it against all advertisers, who then as now wished to outshriek one another in large types and ugly woodcuts.

It was by no means easy to hold a firm hand with the "live business men" of our village and county, who came out twice a year with the spring and fall announcements of their fresh stocks of goods, which they had personally visited New York to lay in; but one of the moral advantages of an enterprise so modest as ours was that the counting-room and the editorial-room were united under the same head, and this head was the editor's. After all, I think we lost nothing by the bold stand we made in behalf of good taste, and at any rate we risked it when we had not the courage to cut off our delinquent subscribers.

We had business advertising from all the villages in the county, for the paper had a large circle of readers in each, and a certain authority, in virtue of representing the county seat. But a great deal of our advertising was of patent medicines, as the advertising still is in the country papers. It was very profitable, and so was the legal advertising, when we could get the money for it. The money had to come by order of court, and about half the time the order of court failed to include the costs of advertising. Then we did not get it, and we never got it, though we were always glad to get the legal advertising on the chance of getting the pay. It was not official, but was made up of the lawyers' notices to defendants of the suits brought against them. If it had all been paid for, I am not sure that we should now be in a position to complain of the ingratitude of the working-classes, or prepared to discuss, from a vantage of personal experience, the duty of vast wealth to the community; but still we should have been better off for that money, as well as the money we lost by a large and loyal list of delinquent subscribers. From time to time there were stirring appeals to these adherents in the editorial columns, which did not stir them, and again the most flattering offers to take any kind of produce in payment of subscription. Sometimes my brother boldly tracked the delinquents to their lairs. In most cases I fancy they escaped whatever arts he used to take them; many died peacefully in their beds afterward, and their debts follow them to this day. Still, he must now and then have got money from them, and I am sure he did get different kinds of "trade." Once, I remember, he brought back in the tail of his wagon a young pig, a pig so very young that my father pronounced it "merely an organization." Whether it had been wrought to frenzy or not by the strange experiences of its journey, I cannot say, but as soon as it was set down on the ground it began to run madly, and it kept on running till it fell down and perished miserably. It had been taken for a year's subscription, and it was quite as if we had lost a delinquent subscriber.

V.

Upon the whole, our paper was an attempt at conscientious and self-respectful journalism; it addressed itself seriously to the minds of its readers; it sought to form their tastes and opinions. I do not know how much it influenced them, if it influenced them at all, and as to any effect beyond the circle of its subscribers, that cannot be imagined, even in a fond retrospect. But since no good effort is altogether

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lost, I am sure that this endeavor must have had some tacit effect; and I am very sure that no one got harm from a sincerity of conviction that devoted itself to the highest interest of the reader, that appealed to nothing base, and flattered nothing foolish in him. It went from our home to the homes of the people in a very literal sense, for my father usually brought his exchanges from the office at the end of his day there, and made his selections or wrote his editorials while the household work went on around him, and his children gathered about the same lamp, with their books or their jokes; there were apt to be a good many of both.

Our county was the most characteristic of that remarkable group of counties in northern Ohio, called the Western Reserve, and forty years ago the population was almost purely New England in origin, either by direct settlement from Connecticut, or indirectly after the sojourn of a generation in New York State. We were ourselves from southern Ohio, where the life was then strongly tinged by the adjoining life of Kentucky and Virginia, and we found these transplanted Yankees cold and blunt in their manners; but we did not undervalue their virtues. They formed in that day a leaven of right thinking and feeling which was to leaven the whole lump of the otherwise proslavery or indifferent State; and I suppose that outside of the antislavery circles of Boston, there was nowhere in the country a population so resolute and so intelligent in its political opinions. They were very radical in every way, and hospitable to novelty of all kinds. I imagine that they tested more new religions and new patents than have been even heard of in less inquiring communities. When we came among them they had lately been swept by the fires of spiritualism, which had left behind a great deal of smoke and ashes where the inherited New England orthodoxy had been. A belief in the saving efficacy of spirit phenomena still exists among them, but not, I fancy, at all in the former measure, when nearly every household had its medium, and the tables that tipped outnumbered the tables that did not tip. The old New York *Tribune*, which was circulated in the county almost as widely as our own paper, had deeply schooled the people in the economics of Horace Greeley, and they were ready for any sort of millennium, religious or industrial, that should arrive, while they looked very wisely after the main chance in the meantime. They were temperate, hard-working, hard-thinking folks, who dwelt on their scattered farms, and came up to the County Fair once a year, when they were apt to visit the printing-office and pay for their papers. In spite of the English superstition to the contrary, the average American is not very curious, if one may judge from his reticence in the presence of things strange enough to excite question; and if our craft surprised these witnesses they rarely confessed it.

They thought it droll, as people of the simpler occupations are apt to think all the more complex arts, and one of them once went so far in expression of his humorous conception as to say, after a long stare at one of the compositors dodging and pecking at the type in his case, "Like an old hen pickin' up millet." This sort of silence, and this sort of comment, both exasperated the printers, who took their revenge as they could. They fed it full, once, when a country subscriber's horse, tied before the office, crossed his hind legs and sat down in his harness like a tired man, and they proposed to go out and offer him a chair, to take him a glass of water, and ask him to come inside. But fate did not often give them such innings; they mostly had to create their chances of reprisal, but they did not mind that.

There was always a good deal of talk going on, but although we were very ardent politicians, the talk was not political. When it was not mere banter, it was mostly literary; we disputed about authors among ourselves, and with the village wits who dropped in. There were several of these who were readers, and they liked to stand with their backs to our stove, and challenge opinion concerning Holmes and Poe, Irving and Macaulay, Pope and Byron, Dickens and Shakespeare.

It was Shakespeare who was oftenest on our tongues; indeed, the printing-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

office of former days had so much affinity with the theatre, that compositors and comedians were easily convertible; and I have seen our printers engaged in hand-to-hand combats with column-rules, two up and two down, quite like the real bouts on the stage. Religion entered a good deal into our discussions, which my father, the most tolerant of men, would not suffer to become irreverent, even on the lips of law-students bathing themselves in the fiery spirit of Tom Paine. He was willing to meet anyone in debate of moral, religious, or political questions, and the wildest-haired Comeouter, the most ruthless sceptic, the most credulous spiritualist, found him ready to take them seriously, even when it was hard not to take them in joke.

It was part of his duty, as publisher of the paper, to bear patiently with another kind of frequenter: the type of farmer who thought he wished to discontinue his paper, and really wished to be talked into continuing it. I think he rather enjoyed letting the subscriber talk himself out, and carrying him from point to point in his argument, always consenting that he knew best what he wanted to do, but skilfully persuading him at last that a home-paper was more suited to his needs than any city substitute. Once I could have given the heads of his reasoning, but they are gone from me now. The editor was especially interested in the farming of the region, and I think it was partly owing to the attention he called to the question that its character was so largely changed. It is still a dairy country, but now it exports grain, and formerly the farmers had to buy their flour.

He did not neglect any real local interest in his purpose of keeping his readers alive to matters of more general importance, but he was fortunate in addressing himself to people who cared for the larger, if remoter, themes he loved. In fact, as long as slavery remained a question in our politics, they had a seriousness and dignity which the present generation can hardly imagine; and men of all callings felt themselves uplifted by the appeal this question made to their reason and conscience. My father constantly taught in his paper that if slavery could be kept out of the territories it would perish, and, as I have said, this was the belief of the vast majority of his readers. They were more or less fervid in it, according to their personal temperaments; some of them were fierce in their convictions, and some humorous, but they were all in earnest. The editor sympathized more with those who took the true faith gayly. All were agreed that the Fugitive Slave Law was to be violated at any risk; it would not have been possible to take an escaping slave out of that county without bloodshed, but the people would have enjoyed outwitting his captors more than destroying them. Even in the great John Brown times, when it was known that there was a deposit of his impracticable pikes somewhere in our woods, and he and his followers came and went among us on some mysterious business of insurrectionary aim, the affair had its droll aspects which none appreciated more keenly than the Quaker-born editor. With his cheerful scepticism, he could never have believed that any harm or danger would come of it all; and I think he would have been hardly surprised to wake up any morning and find that slavery had died suddenly during the night, of its own iniquity.

He was like all country editors then, and I dare say now, in being a printer as well as an editor, and he took a full share in the mechanical labors. These were formerly much more burdensome, for twice or three times the composition was then done in the country offices. At the present day the country printer buys of a city agency his paper already printed on one side, and he gets it for the cost of the blank paper, the agency finding its account in the advertisements it puts in. Besides this patent inside, as it is called, the printer buys stereotyped selections of other agencies, which offer him almost as wide a range of matter as the exchange newspapers he used to choose from. The few columns left for local gossip and general news, and for whatever editorial comment he cares to make on passing events, can be easily filled up by two compositors. But in my time we had three journeymen at work and two or three girl-compositors, and commonly a boy-apprentice besides. The paper was richer in a personal qual-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ity, and the printing-office was unquestionably more of a school. After we began to take girl-apprentices it became coeducative, as far as they cared to profit by it; but I think it did not serve to widen their thoughts or quicken their wits as it did those of the men. They looked to their craft as a living, not as a life, and they had no pride in it. They did not learn the whole trade, as the journeymen had done, and served only such a brief apprenticeship as fitted them to set type. They were then paid by the thousand ems, and their earnings were usually as great at the end of a month as at the end of a year. But the boy who came up from his father's farm, with the wish to be a printer because Franklin had been one, and with the intent of making the office his university, began by sweeping it out, by hewing wood and carrying water for it. He became a roller-boy, and served long behind the press before he was promoted to the case, where he learned slowly and painfully to set type. His wage was forty dollars a year and two suits of clothes, for three years, when his apprenticeship ended, and his wander-years (too often literally) began. He was glad of being inky and stained with the marks of his trade; he wore a four-cornered paper cap, in the earlier stages of his service, and even an apron. When he became a journeyman, he clothed himself in black doeskin and broadcloth, and put on a silk hat, and the thinnest-soled fine boots that could be found, and comported himself as much like a man of the world as he knew how to do. His work brought him acquainted with a vast variety of interests, and kept his mind as well as hands employed; he could not help thinking about them, and he did not fail to talk about them. His comments had generally a slightly acid flavor, and his constant survey of the world, in the "map of busy life" always under his eye, bred in him the contempt of familiarity. He was none the less agreeable for that, and the jokes that flew about from case to case in our office were something the editor would have been the last man to interfere with. He read or wrote on through them all, and now and then turned from his papers to join in them.

VI.

The journeyman of that time and place was much better than the printer whom we had known earlier and in a more lax civilization, who was too apt to be sober only when he had not the means to be otherwise, and who arrived out of the unknown with nothing in his pocket, and departed into it with only money enough to carry him to the next printing-office. If we had no work for him it was the custom to take up a collection in the office, and he accepted it as a usage of the craft, without loss of self-respect. It could happen that his often infirmity would overtake him before he got out of town, but in this case he did not return for a second collection; I suppose that would not have been good form. Now and then a printer of this earlier sort appeared among us for a little time, but the air of the Western Reserve was somehow unfriendly to him, and he soon left us for the kindlier clime of the Ohio River, or for the more southerly region which we were ourselves sometimes so homesick for, and which his soft, rolling accent so pleasantly reminded us of. Still, there seemed to be something about the business—perhaps the arsenic in the type-metal—which everywhere infected the morals with a sort of paresis, as it was said sometimes to affect the nerves.

There was one of our printers who was a capital compositor, a most engaging companion, and of unimpeachable Western Reserve lineage, who would work along in apparent perpetuity on the line of duty, and then suddenly deflect from it. If he wanted a day off, or several days, he would take the time, without notice, and with a princely indifference to any exigency we might be in. He came back when he chose, and offered to go to work again, and I do not remember that he was ever refused. He was never in drink; his behavior was the effect of some obscure principle of conduct, unless it was that moral contagion from the material he wrought in.

I do not know that he was more characteristic, though, than another printer of ours, who was dear to my soul from the quaintness of his humor and his love of literature. I think he was, upon

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the whole, the most original spirit I have known, and it was not the least part of his originality that he was then aiming to become a professor in some college, and was diligently training himself for the calling in all the leisure he could get from his work. The usual thing would have been to read law and crowd forward in political life, but my friend despised this common ideal. We were both studying Latin, he quite by himself, as he studied Greek and German, and I with such help as I could find in reciting to a kindly old minister, who had forgotten most of his own Latin, and whom I do not now wish to blame for falling asleep over the lessons in my presence; I did not know them well enough to keep him up to the work. My friend and I read the language, he more and I less, and we tried to speak it together, to give ourselves consequence, and to have the pleasure of saying before some people's faces what we should otherwise have said behind their backs; I should not now undertake to speak Latin to achieve either of these aims. Besides this, we read a great deal together, mainly Shakespeare and Cervantes. I had a task of a certain number of thousand ems a day, and when I had finished that I was free to do what I liked; he would stop work at the same time, and then we would take our Don Quixote into some clean, sweet beechwoods there were near the village, and laugh our hearts out over it. I can see my friend's strange face now, very regular, very fine, and smooth as a girl's, with quaint blue eyes, shut long, long ago, to this *dolce lome;* and some day I should like to tell all about him; but this is not the place. When the war broke out he left the position he had got by that time in some college or academy farther West, and went into the army. One morning, in Louisiana, he was killed by a guerilla who got a shot at him when he was a little way from his company, and who was probably proud of picking off the Yankee captain. But as yet such a fate was unimaginable. He was the first friend of my youth; he was older than I by five or six years; but we met in an equality of ambition and purpose, though he was rather more inclined to the severity of the scholar's ideal, and I hoped to slip through somehow with a mere literary use of my learning.

VII.

As I have tried to say, the printers of that day had nearly all some affinity with literature, if not some love of it; it was in a sort always at their fingers' ends, and they must have got some touch of it whether they would or not. They thought their trade a poor one, moneywise, but they were fond of it and they did not often forsake it. Their hope was somehow to get hold of a country paper and become editors and publishers; and my friend and I, when he was twenty-four and I eighteen, once crossed over into Pennsylvania, where we had heard there was a paper for sale; but we had not the courage to offer even promises to pay for it. The craft had a repute for insolvency which it merited, and it was at odds with the community at large by reason of something not immediately intelligible in it or at least not classifiable. I remember that when I began to write a certain story of mine, I told Mark Twain, who was once a printer, that I was going to make the hero a printer, and he said, "Better not. People will not understand him. Printing is something every village has in it, but it is always a sort of mystery, and the reader does not like to be perplexed by something that he thinks he knows about." This seemed very acute and just, though I made my hero a printer all the same, and I offer it to the public as a light on the anomalous relation the country printer bears to his fellow-citizens. They see him following his strange calling among them, but to neither wealth nor worship, and they cannot understand why he does not take up something else, something respectable and remunerative; they feel that there must be something weak, something wrong in a man who is willing to wear his life out in a vocation which keeps him poor and dependent on the favor they grudge him. It is like the relation which all the arts bear to the world, and which is peculiarly thankless in a purely commercial civilization like

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

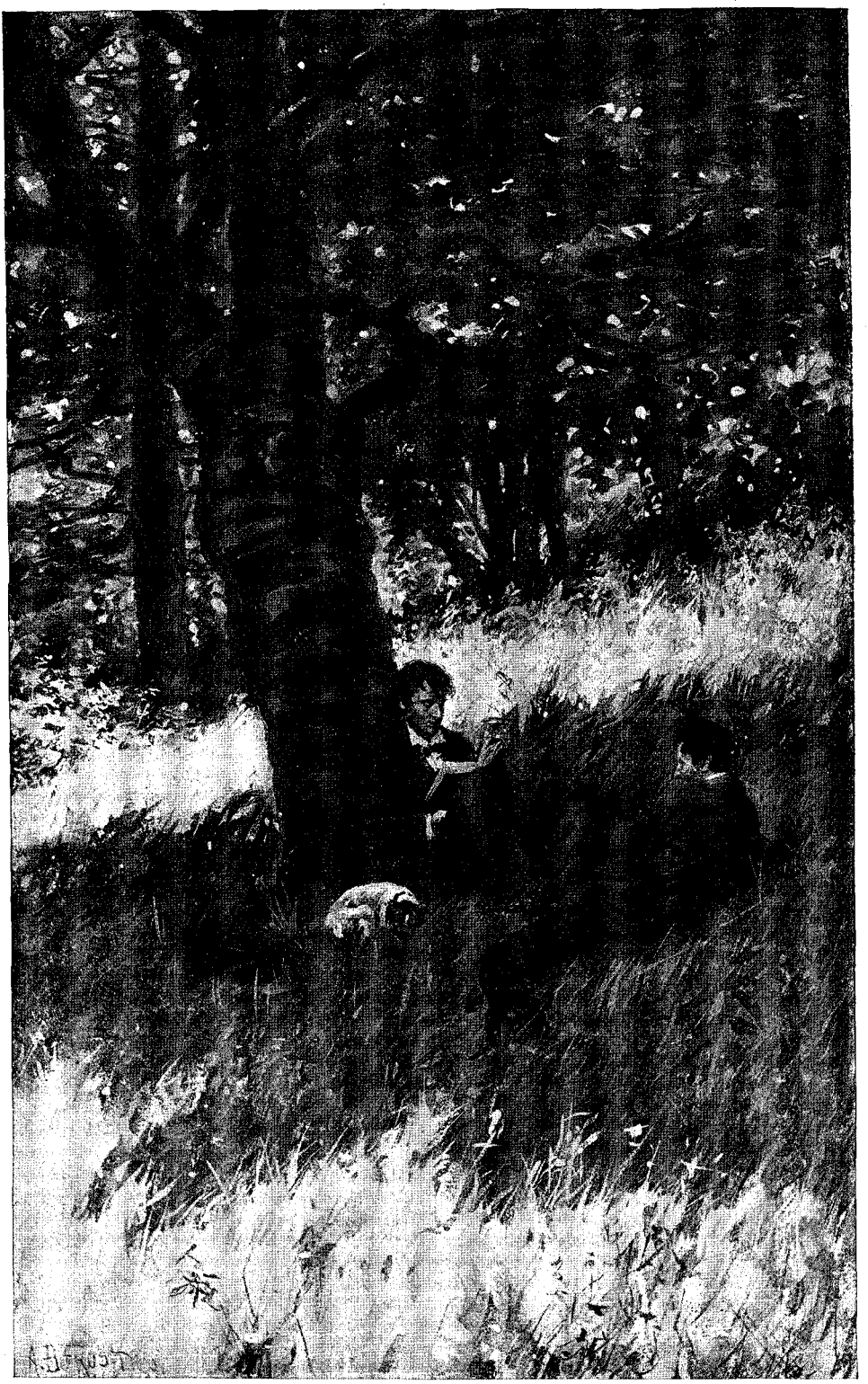
ours; though I cannot pretend that printing is an art in the highest sense. I have heard old journeymen claim that it was a profession and ought to rank with the learned professions, but I am afraid that was from too fond a pride in it. It is in one sort a handicraft, like any other, like carpentering or stone-cutting; but it has its artistic delight, as every handicraft has. There is the ideal in all work; and I have had moments of insurpassable gladness in feeling that I had come near the ideal in what I had done in my trade. This joy is the right of every worker, and in so far as modern methods have taken it from him they have wronged him. I can understand Ruskin in his wish to restore it to some of the handicrafts which have lost it in the "base mechanical" operations of the great manufactories, where men spend their lives in making one thing, or one part of a thing, and cannot follow their work constructively. If that were to be the end, the operative would forever lose the delight in work which is the best thing in the world. But I hope this is not to be the end, and that when people like again to make things for use and not merely for profit, the workman will have again the reward that is more than wages.

I know that in the old-fashioned country printing-office we had this, and we enjoyed our trade as the decorative art it also is. Questions of taste constantly arose in the arrangement of a title-page, the display of a placard or a handbill, the use of this type or that. They did not go far, these questions, but they employed the critical faculty and the æsthetic instinct, and they allied us, however slightly and unconsciously, with the creators of the beautiful.

But now, it must be confessed, printing has shared the fate of all other handicrafts. Thanks to united labor, it is better paid in each of its subdivisions than it once was as a whole. In my time, the hire of a first-rate country printer, who usually worked by the week, was a dollar a day; but of course this was not so little in 1852 as it would be in 1892. My childish remembrance is of the journeymen working two hours after supper, every night, so as to make out a day of twelve hours; but at the time I write of the day of ten hours was the law and the rule, and nobody worked longer, except when the President's message was to be put in type, or on some other august occasion.

The pay is not only increased in proportion to the cost of living, but it is really greater, and the conditions are all very much better. But I believe no apprentice now learns the whole trade, and each of our printers, forty years ago, would have known how to do everything in the kind of office he hoped some day to own. He would have had to make a good many things which the printer now buys, and first among them the rollers, which are used for inking the types on the press. These were of a composition of glue and molasses, and were of an india-rubbery elasticity and consistency, as long as they were in good condition. But with use and time, they became hard, the ink smeared on them, and they failed to impart it evenly to the type; they had to be thrown away, or melted over again. This was done on the office stove, in a large bucket which they were cut up into, with fresh glue and molasses added. It seems in the retrospect to have been rather a simple affair, and I do not now see why casting a roller should have involved so much absolute failure, and rarely have given a satisfactory result. The mould was a large copper cylinder, and the wooden core of the roller was fixed in place by an iron cap and foot-piece. The mixture boiled away, as it now seems to me, for days, and far into the sleepy nights, when as a child I was proud of sitting up with it very late. Then at some weird hour, my father or my brother poured it into the mould, and we went home and left the rest with fate. The next morning the whole office crowded round to see the roller drawn from the mould, and it usually came out with such long hollows and gaps in its sides that it had to be cut up at once, and melted over again. At present, all rollers are bought somewhere in New York or Chicago, I believe, and a printer would no more think of making a roller than of making any other part of his press. "And you know," said my brother, who told me of this change, "we don't wet the paper now." "Good heavens," said I, "you don't print

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



DRAWN BY A. B FROST.

"Then we would take our Don Quixote into some clean, sweet beech-woods there were near the village."—Page 551.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it *dry!*" "Yes, and it doesn't blur any more than if it were wet." I suppose wetting the paper was a usage that antedated the invention of movable types. It used to be drawn quire by quire, through a vat of clear water, and then the night before publication day, it was turned and sprinkled. Now it was printed dry, I felt as if it were time to class Benjamin Franklin with the sun-myths.

VIII.

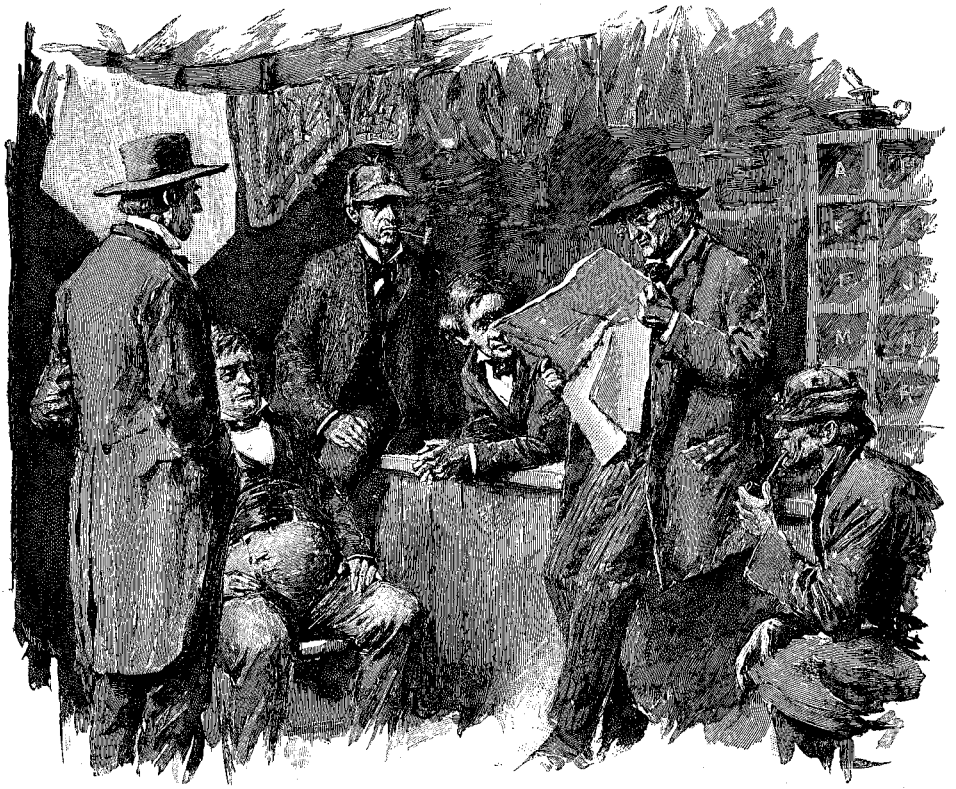
PUBLICATION day was always a time of great excitement. We were busy all the morning getting the last editorials and the latest news in type, and when the paper went to press in the afternoon, the entire force was drafted to the work of helping the engine and the press through their various disabilities and reluctances. Several hands were needed to run the press, even when it was in a willing frame; others folded the papers as they came from it; as many more were called off from their wonted work to address them to the subscribers; for, with the well-known fickleness of their sex, the young ladies of the village ceased to do this as soon as the novelty of the affair wore off. Still, the office was always rather a lively scene, for the paper was not delivered at the village houses, and each subscriber came and got his copy; the villagers began to come about the hour we went to press, the neighboring farmers called next day, and throughout the week. Nearly everybody who witnessed the throes of our machinery had advice or sympathy to offer, and in a place where many people were of a mechanical turn, the spectacular failure of the editor's additions and improvements was naturally a source of public entertainment; perhaps others got as much pleasure out of his inventions as he did.

Of course, about election time the excitement was intensified; we had no railroad or telegraphic communication with the outer world, but it was felt that we somehow had the news, and it was known that we had the latest papers from Cleveland, and that our sheet would report the intelligence from them. After all, however, there was nothing very burning or seething in the eagerness of our subscribers. They could wait; their knowledge of the event would not change it, or add or take away one vote either way. I dare say it is not so very different now, when the railroad and the telegraph have made the little place simultaneous with New York and London. We people who fret our lives out in cities, do not know how tranquil life in the country still is. We talk of the whirl and rush, as if it went on everywhere, but if you will leave the express train anywhere and pass five miles into the country, away from the great through lines, you will not find the whirl and rush. People sometimes go mad there from the dulness and the ennui, as in the cities they sometimes go mad from the stress and the struggle; and the problem of equalizing conditions has no phase more interesting than that of getting the good of the city and the country out of the one into the other. The old-fashioned country newspaper formed almost the sole intellectual experience of the remote and quiet folks who dwelt in their lonely farmsteads

"Skilfully persuading him at last that a home paper was more suited to his needs."—Page 549.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

on the borders of the woods, with few neighbors, and infrequent visits to the township centre, where the church, a store or two, and a tavern constituted a village. They got it out of the post-office there once a week, and read it in the scanty leisure left them by their farm-work, or their household drudgery, and I dare say they found it interesting. There were some men in every neighborhood, tongueyer than the rest, who, when they called on us, seemed to have got it by heart, and who were ready to defend or combat its positions with all comers; this sort usually took some other paper, too, an agricultural paper, or the New York *Trybune*, as they called it; or the weekly edition of a Cleveland journal; it was generally believed that Horace Greeley wrote everything in the *Trybune*, and when a country subscriber unfolded his *Trybune*, he said, with comfortable expectation, "Well, let's see what old Horace says *this* week."



"Well, let's see what old Horace says this week."

But by far the greater number of our subscribers took no paper but our own. I do not know whether there is much more reading done now on the farms, but I doubt it. In the villages, however, the circulation of the nearest city dailies is pretty general, and there is a large sale of the Sunday editions. I am not sure that this is an advantage, but in the undeniable decay of interest in the local preaching, some sort of mental relish for the only day of leisure is necessary. It is not so much a pity that they read the Sunday papers, as that the Sunday papers are so bad. If they were carefully and conscientiously made up, they could be of great use; they wait their reformer, and they do not seem impatient for him.

In the old time, we printers were rather more in touch with the world outside on the journalistic lines than most of our fellow-villagers, but otherwise we were as remote as any of them,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and the weekly issue of the paper had not often anything tumultuously exciting for us. The greatest event of our year was the publication of the President's Message, which was a thrill in my childish life long before I had any conception of its meaning. I fancy that the patent inside, now so universally used by the country papers, originated in the custom which the printers within easy reach of a large city had of supplying themselves with an edition of the President's Message, to be folded into their own sheet, when they did not print their outside on the back of it. There was always a hot rivalry between the local papers in getting out the Message, whether it was bought ready printed, or whether it was set up in the office and printed in the body of the paper. We had no local rival, but all the same we made haste when it was a question of the Message. The printers filled their cases with type, ready for the early copy of the Message, which the editor used every device to secure; when it was once in hand they worked day and night till it was all up, and then the paper was put to press at once, without regard to the usual publication day; and the community was as nearly electrified as could be with our journalistic enterprise, which was more important in our eyes than the matters the message treated of.

"Now and then a printer of this earlier type appeared among us for a little time." Page 550.

There is no longer the eager popular expectation of the President's Message that there once seemed to be; and I think it is something of a loss, that ebb of the high tide of political feeling which began with the era of our immense material prosperity. It was a feeling that formed a solidarity of all the citizens, and if it was not always, or often, the highest interest which can unite men, it was at least not that deadly and selfish cult of business, which centres each of us in his own affairs and kills even our curiosity about others. Very likely people were less bent on the pursuit of wealth in those days, because there was less chance then to grow rich, but the fact remains that they *were* less bent in that direction, and that they gave their minds to other things more than they do now. I think those other things were larger things, and that our civic type was once nobler than it is. It was before the period of corruption, when it was not yet fully known that dollars can do the work of votes, when the votes as yet rather outnumbered the dollars, and more of us had the one than had the other. The great statesman, not the great millionaire, was then the American ideal, and all about in the villages and on the farms the people were eager to know what the President had said to Congress. They are not eager to know now, and that seems rather a pity. Is it because in the war that destroyed slavery, the American Democracy died, and by operation of the same fatal anomaly the American Plutocracy, which Lincoln foreboded, was

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

born; and the people instinctively feel that they have no longer the old interest in President or Congress?

There are those that say so, and whether they are right or not, it is certain that into the great centres where money is heaped up, the life of the country is drained, and the country press has suffered with the other local interests. The railroads penetrate everywhere, and carry the city papers seven times a week, where the home paper pays its tardy visit once, with a patent inside imported from the nearest money-centre, and its few columns of neighborhood gossip, too inconsiderable to be gathered up by the correspondents of the invasive dailies. Other causes have worked against the country press. In counties where there were once two or three papers, there are now eight or ten, without a material increase of population to draw upon for support. The county printing, which the paper of the dominant party could reckon upon, is now shared with other papers of the same politics, and the amateur printing-offices belonging to ingenious boys in every neighborhood get much of the small job-work which once came to the publisher.

"Then at some weird hour my father or my brother poured it into the mould."—Page 552.

It is useless to quarrel with the course of events, for which no one is more to blame than another, though human nat-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ure loves a scapegoat, and from time to time we load up some individual with the common sins, and drive him into a wilderness where he seems rather to enjoy himself than otherwise. I suppose that even if the conditions had continued favorable, the country press could never have become the influence which our editor fondly hoped and earnestly strove to make it. Like all of us who work at all, the country printer had to work too hard; and he had little time to think or to tell how to make life better and truer in any sort. His paper had once perhaps as much influence as the country pulpit; its support was certainly of the same scanty and reluctant sort, without consecration by an avowed self-devotion. He was concerned with the main chance first, and after that there was often no other chance, or he lost sight of it. I should not instance him as an exemplary man, and I should be very far from idealizing him; I should not like even to undertake the task of idealizing a city journalist; and yet, in the retrospect at least, the country printer has his pathos for me—the pathos of a man who began to follow a thankless calling because he loved it, and kept on at it because he loved it, or else because its service had warped and cramped him out of form to follow any other.

EARLY IN THE SPRING.

By Robert Louis Stevenson.

Light foot and tight foot
And green grass spread:
Early in the morning—
But hope is on ahead.

Stout foot and proud foot
And gray dust spread:
Early in the evening,
And hope lies dead.

Long life and short life—
The last word said—
Early in the evening,
There lies the bed.

Brief day and bright day
And sunset red,
Early in the evening
The stars are overhead.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

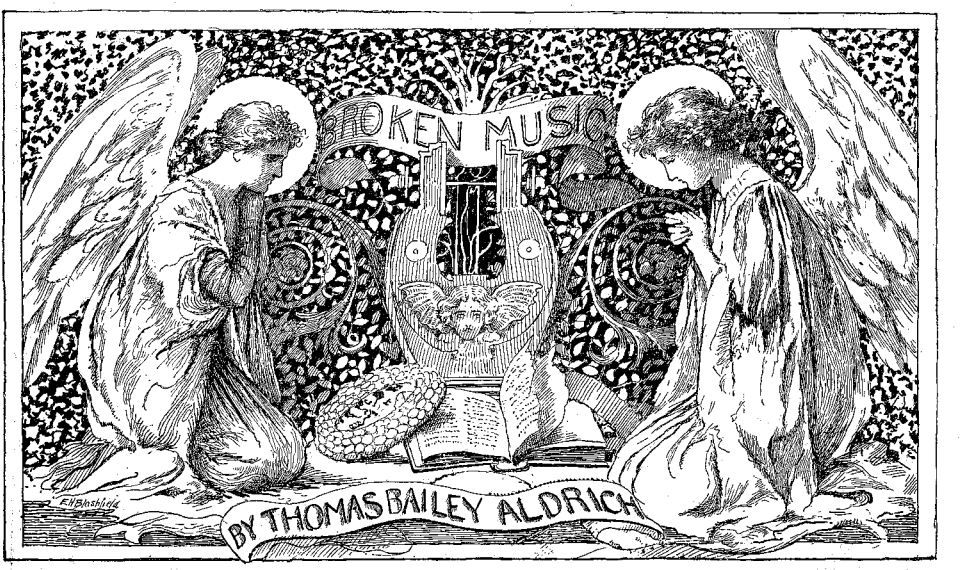
DRAWN BY GEORGE H. BOUGHTON

ENGRAVED BY F. A. PETTIT

THE PARTING GUEST

[*Contributed by the artist to the Exhibition Number of Scribner's Magazine*]

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



A note
All out of tune in this world's instrument.—Amy Levy.

I know not in what fashion she was made,
  Nor what her voice was, when she used to speak,
Nor if the silken lashes threw a shade
  On wan or rosy cheek.

I picture her with sorrowful vague eyes
  Illumed with such strange gleams of inner light
As linger in the drift of London skies
  Ere twilight turns to night.

I know not; I conjecture. 'Twas a girl
  That with her own most gentle desperate hand
From out God's mystic setting plucked life's pearl—
  'Tis hard to understand.

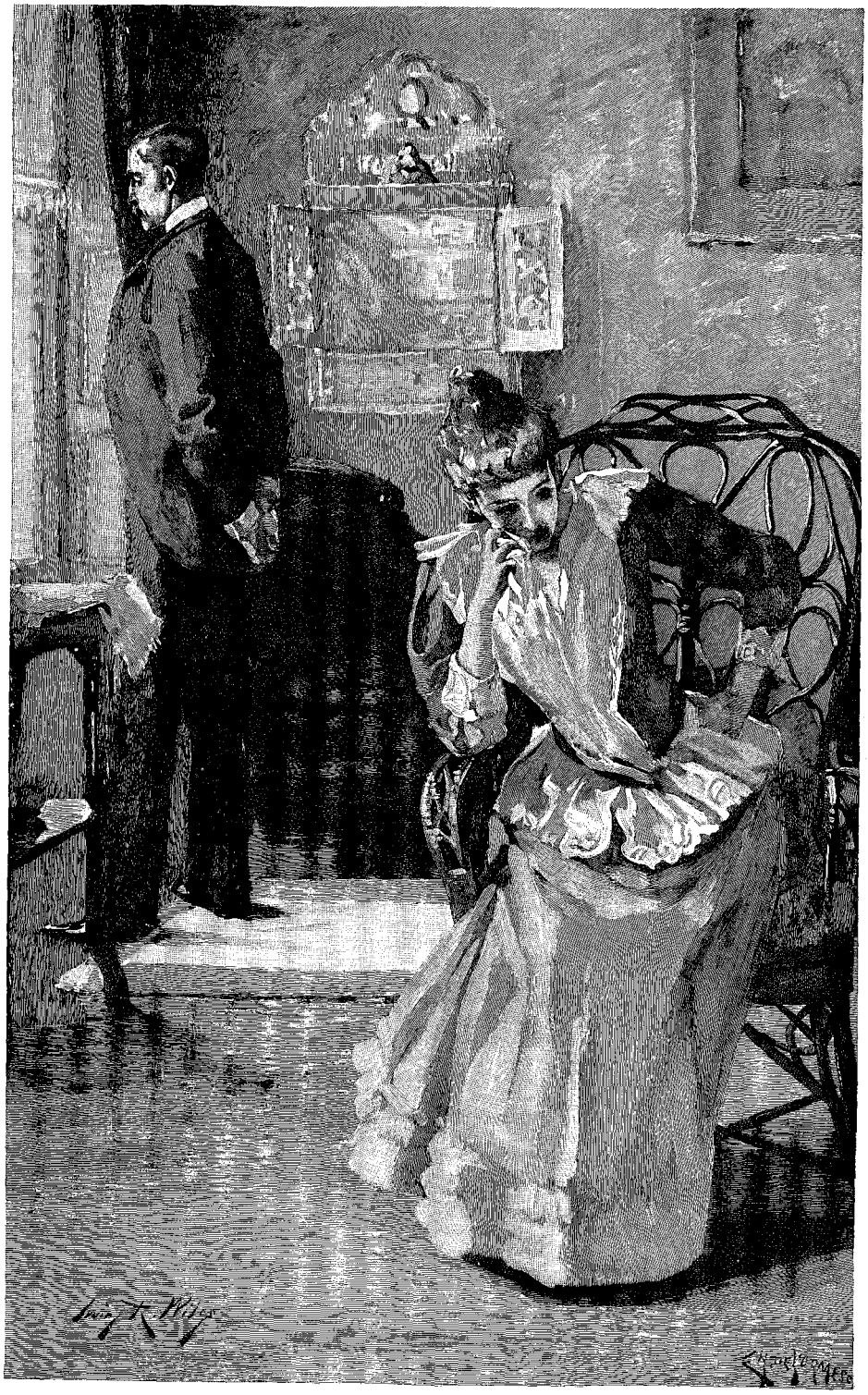
So precious life is! Even to the old
  The hours are as a miser's coins, and she—
Within her hands lay youth's unminted gold
  And all felicity.

The winged impetuous spirit, the white flame
  That was her soul once, whither has it flown?
Above her brow gray lichens blot her name
  Upon the carven stone.

This is her Book of Verses—wren-like notes,
  Shy franknesses, blind gropings, haunting fears:
At times across the chords abruptly floats
  A mist of passionate tears.

A fragile lyre too tensely keyed and strung,
  A broken music, weirdly incomplete:
Here a proud mind, self-baffled and self-stung,
  Lies coiled in dark defeat.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



DRAWN BY IRVING R. WILES

ENGRAVED BY E. H. DEL'ORME

THE MILLINER'S BILL

[*Contributed by the Artist to the Exhibition Number of Scribner's Magazine.*]

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE REFORMATION OF JAMES REDDY.

By Bret Harte.

IT was a freshly furrowed field, so large that the eye at first scarcely took in its magnitude. The irregular surface of upturned, oily, wave-shaped clods took the appearance of a vast, black, chopping sea, that reached from the actual shore of San Francisco Bay to the low hills of the Coast Range. The sea-breeze that blew chilly over this bleak expanse added to that fancy, and the line of straggling whitewashed farm buildings, that half-way across lifted themselves above it, seemed to be placed on an island in its midst. Even the one or two huge, misshapen agricultural machines, abandoned in the furrows, bore an odd resemblance to hulks or barges adrift upon its waste.

This marine suggestion was equally noticeable from the door of one of the farm buildings — a long, detached wooden shed — into which a number of farm laborers were slowly filing, although one man was apparently enough impressed by it to linger and gaze over that rigid sea. Except in their rough dress and the labor-stains of soil on their hands and faces, they represented no particular type or class. They were young and old, robust and delicate, dull and intelligent; kept together only by some philosophical, careless, or humorous acceptance of equally enforced circumstance in their labors, as convicts might have been. For they had been picked up on the streets and wharves of San Francisco — discharged sailors, broken-down miners, helpless new-comers, unemployed professional men, and ruined traders — to assist in ploughing and planting certain broad leagues of rich alluvial soil for a speculative Joint Stock Company, at a weekly wage that would have made an European peasant independent for half a year. Yet there was no enthusiasm in their labor, although it was seldom marked by absolute laziness or evasion, and was more often hindered by ill-regulated "spurts" and excessive effort, as if the laborer was anxious to get through with it; for in the few confidences they exchanged there was little allusion to the present, and they talked chiefly of what they were going to do when their work was over. They were gregarious only at their meals in one of the sheds, or when at night they sought their "bunks" or berths together in the larger building.

The man who had lingered to look at the dreary prospect had a somewhat gloomy, discontented face, whose sensitive lines indicated a certain susceptibility to such impressions. He was further distinguished by having also lingered longer with the washing of his hands and face in the battered tin basin on a stool beside the door, and by the circumstance that the operation revealed the fact that they were whiter than those of his companions. Drying his fingers slowly on the long roller-towel, he stood gazing with a kind of hard abstraction across the darkening field, the strip of faded colorless shore, and the chill, gray sea, to the dividing point of land on the opposite coast, which in the dying daylight was silhouetted against the cold horizon.

He knew that around that point and behind it lay the fierce, half-grown, half-tamed city of yesterday that had worked his ruin. It was scarcely a year ago that he had plunged into its wildest excesses — a reckless gambler among speculators, a hopeless speculator among gamblers — until the little fortune he had brought thither had been swept away.

From time to time he had kept up his failing spirit with the feverish exaltation of dissipation, until, awakening from a drunkard's dream one morning, he had found himself on board a steamboat crossing the bay in company with a gang of farm laborers with whom he

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was hired. A bitter smile crossed his lips as his eyes hovered over the cold, rugged fields before him. Yet he knew that they had saved him. The unaccustomed manual labor in the open air, the regular hours, the silent, heavy, passionless nights, the plain but wholesome food, were all slowly restoring his youth and strength again. Temptation and passion had alike fled these unlovely fields and grim employment. Yet he was not grateful. He nursed his dreary convalescence as he had his previous dissipation, as part of a wrong done him by one for whose sake, he was wont to believe, he had sacrificed himself. That person was a woman.

Turning at last from the prospect and his bitter memories to join his companions, he found that they had all passed in. The benches before the long table on which supper was spread were already filled, and he stood in hesitation, looking down the line of silent and hungrily preoccupied men on either side. A young girl, who was standing near a smaller serving-table, apparently assisting an older woman in directing the operation of half a dozen Chinese waiters, moved forward and cleared a place for him at a side-table, pushing before it the only chair in the room—the one she had lately vacated. As she placed some of the dishes before him with a timid ostentation, and her large but well-shaped hands came suddenly in contact with, and in direst contrast to his own whiter and more delicate ones, she blushed faintly. He lifted his eyes to hers.

He had seen her half a dozen times before, for she was the daughter of the ranch superintendent, and occasionally assisted her mother in this culinary supervision—which did not, however, bring her into any familiar association with the men. Even the younger ones, perhaps from over-consciousness of their inferior position or the preoccupation of their labor, never indulged in any gallantry toward her, and he himself, in his revulsion of feeling against the whole sex, had scarcely noticed that she was good-looking. But this naïve exhibition of preference could not be overlooked, either by his companions, who smiled cynically across the table, or by himself, from whose morbid fancy it struck an ignoble suggestion. Ah, well! the girl was pretty—the daughter of his employer, who rumor said owned a controlling share in the company; why should he not make this chance preference lead to something, if only to ameliorate, in ways like this, his despicable position here. He knew the value of his own good looks, his superior education, and a certain recklessness which women liked; why should he not profit by them as well as the one woman who had brought him to this? He owed her sex nothing; if those among them who were not bad were only fools, there was no reason why he should not deceive them as they had him. There was all this small audacity and cynical purpose in his brown eyes as he deliberately fixed them on hers. And I grieve to say that these abominable sentiments seemed only to impart to them a certain attractive brilliancy, and a determination which the undetermining sex is apt to admire.

She blushed again, dropped her eyes, replied to his significant thanks with a few indistinct words, and drew away from the table with a sudden timidity that was half confession.

She did not approach him again during the meal, but seemed to have taken a sudden interest in the efficiency of the waiters, generally, which she had not shown before. I do not know whether this was merely an effort at concealment, or an awakened recognition of her duty; but, after the fashion of her sex—and perhaps in contrast to his—she was kinder that evening to the average man on account of *him*. He did not, however, notice it; nor did her absence interfere with his now healthy appetite; he finished his meal, and only when he rose to take his hat from the peg above him, did he glance around the room. Their eyes met again. As he passed out, although it was dark, he put on his hat a little more smartly.

The air was clear and cold, but the outlines of the landscape had vanished. His companions, with the instinct of tired animals, were already making their way in knots of two or three, or

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in silent file, across the intervening space between the building and their dormitory. A few had already lit their pipes and were walking leisurely, but the majority were hurrying from the chill sea-breeze to the warmth and comfort of the long, well-lit room, lined with blanketed berths, and set with plain wooden chairs and tables. The young man lingered for a moment on the wooden platform outside the dining-shed—partly to evade this only social gathering of his fellows as they retired for the night, and partly attracted by a strange fascination to the faint distant glow, beyond the point of land, which indicated the lights of San Francisco.

There was a slight rustle behind him! It was the young girl, who with a white woollen scarf thrown over her head and shoulders, had just left the room. She started when she saw him, and for an instant hesitated.

"You are going home, Miss Woodridge?" he said, pleasantly.

"Yes," she returned, in a faint, embarrassed voice. "I thought I'd run on ahead of Ma!"

"Will you allow me to accompany you?"

"It's only a step," she protested, indicating the light in the window of the superintendent's house—the most remote of the group of buildings, yet scarcely a quarter of a mile distant.

"But it's quite dark," he persisted, smilingly.

She stepped from the platform to the ground; he instantly followed and ranged himself at a little distance from her side. She protested still feebly against his "troubling himself," but in another moment they were walking on quietly together. Nevertheless, a few paces from the platform they came upon the upheaved clods of the fresh furrows, and their progress over them was slow and difficult.

"Shall I help you? Will you take my arm?" he said, politely.

"No, thank you, Mr. Reddy."

So! she knew his name! He tried to look into her eyes, but the woollen scarf hid her head. After all, there was nothing strange in her knowing him; she probably had the names of the men before her in the dining-room, or on the books. After a pause he said:

"You quite startled me. One becomes such a mere working machine here, that one quite forgets one's own name. Especially with the prefix of 'Mr.'"

"And if it don't happen to be one's real name either," said the girl, with an odd, timid audacity.

He looked up quickly—more attracted by her manner than her words; more amused than angry.

"But Reddy happens to be my real name."

"Oh!"

"What made you think it was not?"

The clods over which they were clambering were so uneven that sometimes the young girl was mounting one at the same moment that Reddy was descending from another. Her reply, half muffled in her shawl, was delivered over his head. "Oh, because Pa says most of the men here don't give their real names—they don't care to be known afterward. Ashamed of their work, I reckon."

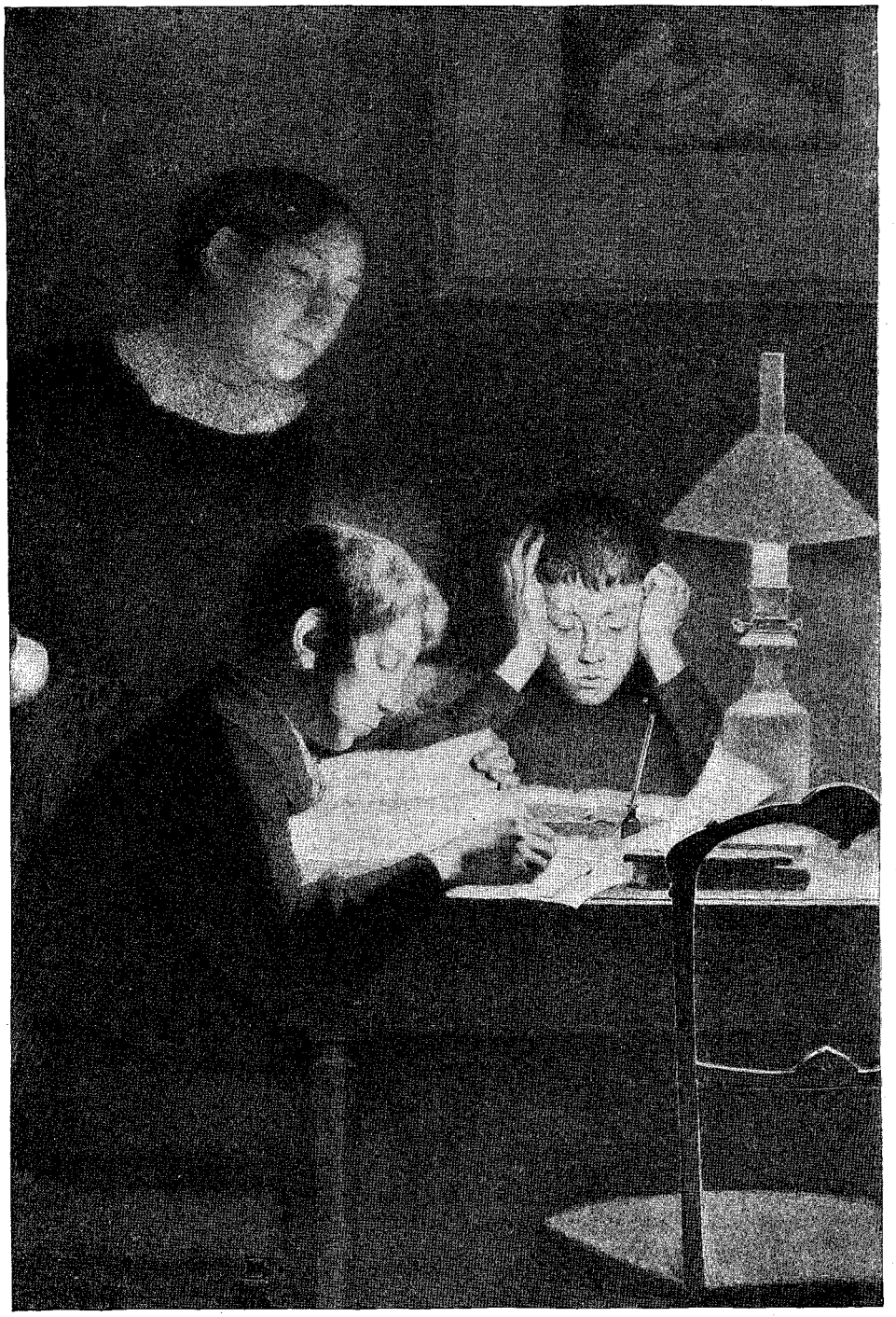
His face flushed a moment, even in the darkness. He *was* ashamed of his work, and perhaps a little of the pitiful sport he was beginning. But oddly enough, the aggressive criticism only whetted his purpose. The girl was evidently quite able to take care of herself; why should he be over-chivalrous?

"It isn't very pleasant to be doing the work of a horse, an ox, or a machine, if you can do other things," he said, half seriously.

"But you never used to do anything at all, did you?" she asked.

He hesitated. Here was a chance to give her an affecting history of his former exalted fortune and position, and perhaps even to stir her evidently romantic nature with some suggestion of his sacrifices to one of her own sex. Women liked that sort of thing. It aroused at once their emulation and their condemnation of each other. He seized the opportunity, but—for some reason, he knew not why—awkwardly and clumsily, with a simulated pathos that was lachrymose, a self-assertion that was boastful, and a dramatic man-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



DRAWN BY BOUTET DE MONVEL

STUDY HOUR

[*Contributed by the artist to the Exhibition Number of Scribner's Magazine.*]

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ner that was unreal. Suddenly the girl stopped him.

"Yes, I know all *that*, Pa told me. Told me you'd been given away by some woman."

His face again flushed — this time with anger. The utter failure of his story to excite her interest, and her perfect possession of herself and the situation—so unlike her conduct a few moments before — made him savagely silent, and he clambered on sullenly at her side. Presently she stopped, balancing herself with a dexterity he could not imitate on one of the larger upheaved clods, and said:

"I was thinking that, as you can't do much with those hands of yours, digging and shovelling, and not much with your feet either, over ploughed ground, you might do some inside work, that would pay you better, too. You might help in the dining-room, setting table and washing up, helping Ma and me—though *I* don't do much except overseeing. I could show you what to do at first, and you'd learn quick enough. If you say 'yes,' I'll speak to Pa to-night. He'll do whatever I say."

The rage and shame that filled his breast choked even the bitter laugh that first rose to his lips. If he could have turned on his heel and left her with marked indignation, he would have done so, but they were scarcely half-way across the field; his stumbling retreat would have only appeared ridiculous, and he was by no means sure that she would not have looked upon it as merely a confession of his inability to keep up with her. And yet there was something peculiarly fascinating and tantalizing in the situation. She did not see the sardonic glitter in his eye as he said, brutally:

"Ha! and that would give me the exquisite pleasure of being near you."

She seemed a little confused, even under her enwrappings, and in stepping down her foot slipped. Reddy instantly scrambled up to her and caught her as she was pitching forward into the furrow. Yet in the struggle to keep his own foothold he was aware that she was assisting him, and although he had passed his arm around her waist, as if for her better security, it was only through *her* firm grasp of his wrists that he regained his own

"Reddy went back to his work disappointed but not discomfited."—Page 570.

footing. The "cloud" had fallen back from her head and shoulders, her heavy hair had brushed his cheek and left its faint odor in his nostrils; the rounded outline of her figure had been slightly drawn against his own. His mean resentment wavered; her proposition, which at first seemed only insulting, now took a vague form of satisfaction; his ironical suggestion seemed a natural expression. "Well, I say 'yes,' then," he said, with an affected laugh. "That is, if you think I can manage to do the work; it is not exactly in my line, you know." Yet he somehow felt that his laugh was feeble and unconvincing.

"Oh, it's easy enough," said the girl, quietly. "You've only got to be clean —and that's in your line, I should say."

"And if I thought it would please you," he added, with another attempt at gallantry.

She did not reply, but moved steadily

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

on, he fancied a little more rapidly. They were nearing the house; he felt he was losing time and opportunity. The uneven nature of the ground kept him from walking immediately beside her, unless he held her hand or arm. Yet an odd timidity was overtaking him. Surely this was the same girl whose consciousness and susceptibility were so apparent a moment ago, yet her speech had been inconsistent, unsympathetic, and coldly practical. "It's very kind of you," he began again, scrambling up one side of the furrow as she descended on the other, "to—to—take such an interest in —in a stranger, and I wish you knew how—" (she had mounted the ridge again, and stood balancing herself as if waiting for him to finish his sentence), "how—how deeply—I—I——" She dropped quickly down again with the same movement of uneasy consciousness, and he left the sentence unfinished. The house was now only a few yards away; he hurried forward, but she reached the wooden platform and stood upon it first. He, however, at the same moment caught her hand.

"Because I've got an idea of startin' a hotel in the Oak Grove."—Page 571.

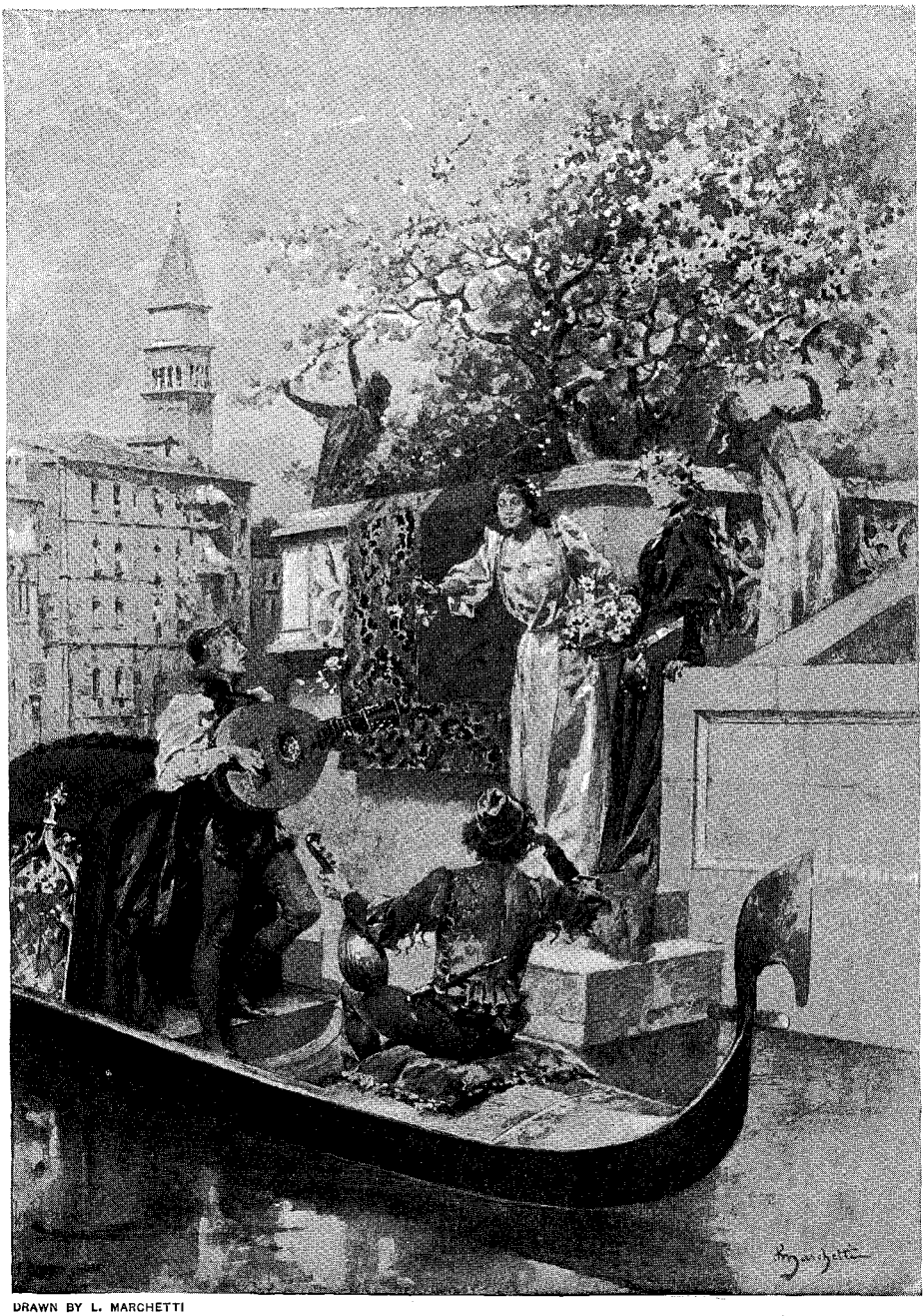
"I want to thank you," he said, "and say good-night."

"Good-night." Her voice was indistinct again, and she was trembling. Emboldened and reckless, he sprang upon the platform, and encircling her with one arm, with his other hand he unloosed the woollen cloud around her head and bared her faintly flushed cheek and half-open, hurriedly breathing lips. But the next moment she threw her head back with a single powerful movement, and, as it seemed to him, with scarcely an effort cast him off with both hands, and sent him toppling from the platform to the ground. He scrambled quickly to his feet again, flushed, angry, and—frightened! Perhaps she would call her father; he would be insulted, or worse—laughed at! He had lost even this pitiful chance of bettering his condition. But he was as relieved as he was surprised, to see that she was standing quietly on the edge of the platform, apparently waiting for him to rise. Her face was still uncovered, still slightly flushed, but bearing no trace of either insult or anger. When he stood erect again, she looked at him gravely and drew the woollen cloud over her head, as she said, calmly, "Then I'll tell Pa you'll take the place, and I reckon you'll begin to-morrow morning."

II.

ANGERED, discomfited, and physically and morally beaten, James Reddy stumbled and clambered back across the field. The beam of light that had streamed out over the dark field as the door opened and shut on the girl, left him doubly confused and bewildered. In his dull anger and mortification, there seemed only one course for him to pursue. He would demand his wages in the morning, and cut the whole concern. He would go back to San Francisco and work there, where he at least had friends who respected his station. Yet, he ought to have refused the girl's offer before she had repulsed him; his retreat now meant nothing, and might even tempt her, in her vulgar pique, to reveal her rebuff of him. He raised his eyes mechanically, and looked gloomily across the dark waste and distant bay to the op-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



DRAWN BY L. MARCHETTI

A SONG OF SPRINGTIME

[*Contributed by the artist to the Exhibition Number of Scribner's Magazine.*]

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

posite shore. But the fog had already hidden the glow of the city's lights, and thickening around the horizon, seemed to be slowly hemming him in with the dreary Rancho. In his present frame of mind there was a certain fatefulness in this that precluded his once free agency, and to that extent relieved and absolved *him* of any choice. He reached the dormitory and its turned-down lights in a state of tired and dull uncertainty, for which sleep seemed to offer the only relief. He rolled himself in his blankets with an animal instinct of comfort and shut his eyes, but their sense appeared to open upon Nelly Woodridge as she stood looking down upon him from the platform. Even through the dull pain of his bruised susceptibilities he was conscious of a strange satisfaction he had not felt before. He fell asleep at last, to waken only to the sunlight streaming through the curtainless windows on his face. To his surprise the long shed was empty and deserted, except for a single Chinaman who was sweeping the floor at the further end. As Reddy started up the man turned and approached him with a characteristic, vague, and patient smile.

"All lity, John, you sleepee heap! Mistel Woodlidge he say you no go wolkee field allee same Mellikan man. You stoppee inside housee allee same *me*. Shabbee? You come to glubbee (grub) now" (pointing to the distant dining-shed), "and then you washee dish."

The full extent of his new degradation flashed upon Reddy with this added insult of his brother menial's implicit equality. He understood it all. He had been detached from the field-workers and was to come to a later breakfast, perhaps the broken victuals of the first repast, and wash the dishes. He remembered his new bargain. Very well! he would refuse positively, take his dismissal, and leave that morning! He hurriedly dressed himself, and followed the Chinaman into the open air.

The fog still hung upon the distant bay and hid the opposite point. But the sun shone with dry Californian brilliancy over the league-long field around him, revealing every detail of the Rancho with sharp, matter-of-fact directness, and without the least illusion of distance or romance. The rough, unplaned, unpainted walls of the dinner-shed stood out clearly before him; the half-filled buckets of water on the near platform, and the immense tubs piled with dirty dishes. He scowled darkly as he walked forward, conscious, nevertheless, of the invigorating discipline of the morning air and the wholesome whip in the sky above him. He entered sharply and aggressively. To his relief, the room at first sight seemed like the dormitory he had just left, to be empty. But a voice, clear, dry, direct, and practical as the morning itself, spoke in his ear: "Mornin', Reddy! My daughter says you're willin' to take an indoor job, and I reckon, speakin' square, as man to man, it's more in your line than what you've bin doin'. It mayn't be high-toned work, but work's *work* anyhow you can fix it; and the only difference I kin see is in the work that a man does squarely, and the work that he shirks."

"But," said Reddy, hurriedly, "there's a mistake. I came here only to——"

"Work like the others, I understand. Well, you see you *can't*. You do your best, I know. I ain't findin' fault, but it ain't in your line. *This* is, and the pay is better."

"But," stammered Reddy, "Miss Woodridge didn't understand——"

"Yes, she did," returned Woodridge, impatiently, "and she told me. She says she'll show you round at first. You'll catch on all right. Sit down and eat your breakfast, and she'll be along before you're through. Ez for *me*, I must get up and get. So long!" and before Reddy had an opportunity to continue his protest, he turned away.

The young man glanced vexatiously around him. A breakfast much better in service and quality than the one he had been accustomed to smoked on the table. There was no one else in the room. He could hear the voices of the Chinese waiters in the kitchen beyond. He was healthily hungry, and after a moment's hesitation sat down and began his meal. He could expostulate with her afterward, and withdraw his promise. He was entitled to his breakfast, anyway!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Once or twice, while thus engaged, he heard the door of the kitchen open and the clipping tread of the Chinese waiters, who deposited some rattling burden on the adjacent tables, but he thought it prudent not to seem to notice them. When he had finished, the pleasant, hesitating, boyish contralto of Miss Woodridge fell upon his ear.

"When you're ready, I'll show you how to begin your work."

He turned quickly, with a flush of mortification at being discovered at his repast, and his anger returned. But as his eyes fell upon her delicately colored but tranquil face, her well-shaped figure, coquettishly and spotlessly cuffed, collared, and aproned, and her clear blue but half-averted eyes, he again underwent a change. She certainly was very pretty—that most seductive prettiness which seemed to be warmed into life by her consciousness of himself. Why should he take her or himself so seriously? Why not play out the farce and let those who would criticise him and think his acceptance of the work degrading, understand that it was only an affair of gallantry. He could afford to serve Woodridge at least a few weeks for the favor of this Rachel! Forgetful of his rebuff of the night before, he fixed his brown eyes on hers with an audacious levity.

"Oh, yes—the work! Let us see it. I'm ready in name and nature for anything that Miss Woodridge wants of me. I'm just dying to begin."

His voice was raised slightly, with a high comedy jauntiness, for the benefit of the Chinese waiters who might be lingering to see the "Mellican man" assume their functions. But it failed in effect. With their characteristic calm acceptance of any eccentricity in a "foreign devil," they scarcely lifted their eyes. The young girl pointed to a deep basket filled with dishes which had been placed on the larger table, and said, without looking at Reddy:

"You had better begin by 'checking' the crockery. That is, counting the pieces separately and then arranging them in sets as they come back from washing. There's the book to compare them with and to set down what is broken, missing, or chipped. You'll have a clean towel with you to wipe the pieces that have not been cleaned enough; or, if they are too dirty, you'll send them back to the kitchen."

"Couldn't I wash them myself?" said Reddy, continuing his ostentatious levity.

"Not yet," said the girl, with grave hesitation; "you'd break them."

She stood watching him, as with affected hilarity he began to take the dishes from the basket. But she noticed that in spite of this jocular simulation his grasp was firm and delicate, and that there was no clatter—which would have affected her sensitive ear—as he put them down. She laid a pencil and account book beside him and turned away.

"But you are not going?" he said, in genuine surprise.

"Yes," she said, quietly, "until you get through 'checking.' Then I'll come back and show you what you have to do next. You're getting on very well."

"But that was because you were with me."

She colored slightly and, without looking at him, moved slowly to the door and disappeared.

Reddy went back to his work, disappointed but not discomfited. He was getting accustomed to the girl's eccentricities. Whether it was the freshness of the morning air and sunlight streaming in at the open windows, the unlooked-for solitude and security of the empty room, or that there was nothing really unpleasant in his occupation, he went on cheerfully "checking" the dishes, narrowly examining them for chips and cracks, and noting them in the book. Again discovering that a few were imperfectly cleaned and wiped, he repaired the defect with cold water and a towel without the least thought of the operation being degrading. He had finished his task in half an hour; she had not returned; why should he not go on and set the table? As he straightened and turned the coarse table-cloth, he made the discovery that the long table was really composed of half a dozen smaller ones, and that the hideous parallelogram which had always so of-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fended him was merely the outcome of carelessness and want of taste. Without a moment's hesitation he set at work to break up the monotonous line and rearranged the tables laterally, with small open spaces between them. The task was no light one, even for a stronger man, but he persevered in it with a new-found energy until he had changed the whole aspect of the room. It looked larger, wider, and less crowded; its hard, practical, workhouse-like formality had disappeared. He had paused to survey it, panting still with his unusual exertion, when a voice broke upon his solitude.

"Well, I wanter know!"

The voice was not Nelly's, but that of her mother—a large-boned, angular woman of fifty—who had entered the room unperceived. The accents were simply those of surprise, but on James Reddy's present sensitive mood, coupled with the feeling that here was a new witness to his degradation, he might have resented it; but he detected the handsome, reserved figure of the daughter a few steps behind her. Their eyes met; wonderful to relate, the young girl's no longer evaded him, but looked squarely into his with a bright expression of pleasure he had not seen before. He checked himself with a sudden thrill of gratification.

"Well, I declare," continued Mrs. Woodridge; "is that *your* idea — or yours, Helen?"

Here Reddy simply pointed out the advantages for serving afforded by the new arrangement; that all the tables were equally and quickly accessible from the serving-table and sideboard, and that it was no longer necessary to go the whole length of the room to serve the upper table. He tactfully did not refer to the improved appearance of the room.

"Well, as long as it ain't mere finikin," said the lady, graciously, "and seems to bring the folks and their vittles nearer together—we'll try it today. It does look kinder *cityfied*—and I reckoned that was all the good it was. But I calkilated you were goin' to check the crockery this morning."

"It's done," said Reddy, smilingly handing her the account-book.

Mrs. Woodridge glanced over it and then surveyed her new assistant.

"And you didn't find any plates that were dirty and that had to be sent back?"

"Yes, two or three, but I cleaned them myself."

Mrs. Woodridge glanced at him with a look of approving curiosity, but his eyes were just then seeking her daughter's for a more grateful sympathy. All of which the good lady noted, and as it apparently answered the unasked question in her own mind, she only uttered the single exclamation: "Humph!"

But the approbation he received later at dinner, in the satisfaction of his old companions with the new arrangement, had also the effect of diverting from him the criticism he had feared they would make in finding him installed as an assistant to Mrs. Woodridge. On the contrary, they appeared only to recognize in him some especial and superior faculty utilized for their comfort, and when the superintendent, equally pleased, said it was "all Reddy's own idea," no one doubted that it was this particular stroke of genius which gained him the obvious promotion. If he had still thought of offering his flirtation with Nelly as an excuse, there was now no necessity for any. Having shown to his employers his capacity for the highest and lowest work, they naturally preferred to use his best abilities—and he was kept from any menial service. His accounts were so carefully and intelligently rendered, that the entire care of the building and its appointments was entrusted to him. At the end of the week Mr. Woodridge took him aside.

"I say, you ain't got any job in view arter you finish up here, hev ye?"

Reddy started. Scarcely ten days ago he had a hundred projects, schemes, and speculations, more or less wild and extravagant, wherewith he was to avenge and recoup himself in San Francisco. Now they were gone—he knew not where and how. He briefly said he had not.

"Because," continued Woodridge, "I've got an idea of startin' a hotel in the Oak Grove, just on the slope back o' the Rancho. The company's bound

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to make some sort o' settlement there for the regular hands, and the place is pooty enough for 'Frisco people who want to run over here and get set up for a day or two. Thar's plenty of wood and water up thar, and the company's sure to have a wharf down on the shore. I'll provide the capital, if you will put in your time. You can sling in ez much style as you like there" (this was an allusion to Reddy's attempt to enliven the blank walls with colored pictures from the illustrated papers and green ceanothus sprays from the slope); "in fact, the more style the better for them city folks. Well, you think it over."

He did. But meantime he seemed to make little progress in his court of the superintendent's daughter. He tried to think it was because he had allowed himself to be diverted by his work, but although she always betrayed the same odd physical consciousness of his presence, it was certain that she never encouraged him. She gave him the few directions that his new occupation still made necessary, and looked her approval of his success. But nothing more. He was forced to admit that this was exactly what she might have done as the superintendent's daughter to a deserving employee. Whereat, for a few days he assumed an air of cold and ceremonious politeness, until perceiving that, far from piquing the girl, it seemed to gratify her, and even to render her less sensitive in his company, he sulked in good earnest. This proving ineffective also—except to produce a kind of compassionate curiosity—his former dull rage returned. The planting of the Rancho was nearly over; his service would be ended next week; he had not yet given his answer to Woodridge's proposition; he would decline it and cut the whole concern!

It was a crisp Sunday morning. The breakfast hour was later on that day to allow the men more time for their holiday, which however they generally spent in cards, gossip, or reading in their sleeping-sheds. It usually delayed Reddy's work, but as he cared little for the companionship of his fellows, it enabled him, without a show of unsociability, to seclude himself in the dining-room. And this morning he was early approached by his employer.

"I'm goin' to take the women folks over to Oakdale to church," said Mr. Woodridge; "ef ye keer to join us thar's a seat in the wagon, and I'll turn on a couple of Chinamen to do the work for you, just now; and Nelly or the old woman will give you a lift this afternoon with the counting up."

Reddy felt instinctively that the invitation had been instigated by the young girl. A week before he would have rejoiced at it—a month ago he would have accepted it if only as a relief to his degraded position, but in the pique of this new passion he almost rudely declined it. An hour later he saw Nelly becomingly and even tastefully dressed—with the American girl's triumphant superiority to her condition and surroundings—ride past in her father's smart "carryall." He was startled to see that she looked so like a lady. Then, with a new and jealous inconsistency, significant of the progress of his passion, he resolved to go to church too. She should see that he was not going to remain behind like a mere slave. He remembered that he had still certain remnants of his past finery in his trunk; he would array himself in them, walk to Oakdale and make one of the congregation. He managed to change his clothes without attracting the attention of his fellows and set out.

The air was pure but keen, with none of the languor of spring in its breath, although a few flowers were beginning to star the weedy wagon-tracked lane, and there was an awakening spice in the wayside southernwood and myrtle. He felt invigorated, although it seemed only to whet his jealous pique. He hurried on without even glancing toward the distant coast-line of San Francisco or even thinking of it. The bitter memories of the past had been obliterated by the bitterness of the present. He no longer thought of "that woman;" even when he had threatened to himself to return to San Francisco, he was vaguely conscious that it was not *she* who was again drawing him there, but Nelly who was driving him away.

The service was nearly over when he arrived at the chilly little corrugated-zinc church at Oakdale, but he slipped

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

into one of the back seats. A few worshippers turned round to look at him. Among them were the daughters of a neighboring miller, who were slightly exercised over the unusual advent of a good-looking stranger with certain exterior signs of elegance. Their excitement was communicated by some mysterious instinct to their neighbor, Nelly Woodridge. She also turned and caught his eye. But to all appearances she not only showed no signs of her usual agitation at his presence, but did not seem to even recognize him. In the acerbity of his pique he was for a moment gratified at what he believed to be the expression of her wounded pride, but his uneasiness quickly returned, and at the conclusion of the service he slipped out of the church with one or two of the more restless congregation. As he passed through the aisle he heard the escort of the miller's daughters, in response to a whispered inquiry, say distinctly: "Only the head-waiter over at the Company's Rancho." Whatever hesitating idea Reddy might have had of waiting at the church door for the appearance of Nelly, vanished before the brutal truth. His brow darkened, and with flushed cheeks he turned his back upon the building and plunged into the woods. This time there was no hesitation in his resolve; he would leave the Rancho at the expiration of his engagement. Even in a higher occupation he felt he could never live down his reputation there.

In his morose abstraction he did not know how long or how aimlessly he had wandered among the mossy live-oaks, his head and shoulders often imperilled by the down-curving of some huge knotted limb; his feet straying blindly from the faint track over the thickly matted carpet of chickweed which hid their roots. But it was nearly an hour before he emerged upon a wide, open, wooded slope, and from the distant view of field and shore, knew that he was at Oak Grove, the site of Woodridge's projected hotel. And there, surely, at a little distance, was the Woodridge's wagon and team tied up to a sapling, while the superintendent and his wife were slowly climbing the slope, and apparently examining the prospect. Without waiting to see if Nelly was with them, Reddy instantly turned to avoid meeting them. But he had not proceeded a hundred yards before he came upon that young lady, who had evidently strayed from the party, and who was now unconsciously advancing toward him. A *rencontre* was inevitable.

She started slightly and then stopped, with all her old agitation and embarrassment. But, to his own surprise, he was also embarrassed and even tongue-tied.

She spoke first.

"You were at church. I didn't quite know you in—in—these clothes."

In her own finery she had undergone such a change to Reddy's consciousness that he, for the first time in their acquaintance, now addressed her as on his own level, and as if she had no understanding of his own feelings.

"Oh," he said, with easy bitterness, "*others* did, if you did not. They all detected the 'head-waiter' at the Union Company's Rancho. Even if I had accepted your kindness in offering me a seat in your wagon, it would have made no difference." He was glad to put this construction on his previous refusal, for in the new relations which seemed to be established by their Sunday clothes, he was obliged to soften the churlishness of that refusal also.

"I don't think you'd look nice setting the table in kid gloves," she said, glancing quickly at his finery as if accepting it as the real issue; "but you can wear what you like at other times. *I* never found fault with your working clothes."

There was such a pleasant suggestion in her emphasis that his ill-humor softened. Her eyes wandered over the opposite grove, where her unconscious parents had just disappeared.

"Papa's very keen about the hotel," she continued, "and is going to have the workmen break ground to-morrow. He says he'll have it up in two months and ready to open, if he has to make the men work double time. When you're manager, you won't mind what folks say."

There was no excuse for his further hesitation. He must speak out, but he did it in a half-hearted way.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"But if I simply go away—*without* being manager—I won't hear their criticism either."

"What do you mean?" she said, quickly.

"I've—I've been thinking of—of going back to San Francisco," he stammered, awkwardly.

A slight flush of contemptuous indignation passed over her face, and gave it a strength and expression he had never seen there before. "Oh, you've not reformed yet, then?" she said, under her scornful lashes.

"I don't understand you," he said, flushing.

"Father ought to have told you," she went on, dryly, "that that woman has gone off to the Springs with her husband, and you won't see *her* at San Francisco."

"I don't know what you mean—and your father seems to take an unwarrantable interest in my affairs," said Reddy, with an anger that he was conscious, however, was half simulated.

"No more than he ought to, if he expects to trust you with all *his* affairs," said the girl, shortly; "but you had better tell him you have changed your mind at once, before he makes any further calculations on your staying. He's just over the hill there, with mother."

She turned away coldly as she spoke, but moved slowly and in the direction of the hill, although she took a less direct trail than the one she had pointed to him. But he followed her, albeit still embarrassedly, and with that new sense of respect which had checked his former surliness. There was her strong, healthy, well-developed figure moving before him, but the modish gray dress seemed to give its pronounced outlines something of the dignity of a goddess. Even the firm hands had the distinguishment of character.

"You understand," he said, apologetically, "that I mean no discourtesy to your father or his offer. And,"—he hesitated—"neither is my reason what you would infer."

"Then what is it?" she asked, turning to him abruptly. "You know you have no other place when you leave here, nor any chance as good as the one father offers you. You are not fit for any other work, and you know it. You have no money to speculate with, nor can you get any. If you could, you would have never stayed here."

He could not evade the appalling truthfulness of her clear eyes. He knew it was no use to lie to her; she had evidently thoroughly informed herself regarding his past; more than that, she seemed to read his present thoughts. But not all of them! No! he could startle her still! It was desperate, but he had nothing now to lose. And she liked the truth, she should have it!

"You are right," he said, shortly; "these are not my reasons."

"Then what reason have you?"

"You!"

"Me?" she repeated, incredulously, yet with a rising color.

"Yes, *you!* I cannot stay here, and have you look down upon me."

"I don't look down on you," she said simply, yet without the haste of repelling an unjust accusation. "Why should I? Mother and I have done the same work that you are doing—if that's what you mean—and father, who is a man like yourself, helped us at first, until he could do other things better." She paused. "Perhaps you think so because *you* looked down on us when you first came here."

"But I didn't," said Reddy, quickly.

"You did," said the young girl, quietly. "That's why you acted toward me as you did the night you walked home with me. You would not have behaved in that way to any San Francisco young lady—and I'm not one of your—fast—*married women.*"

Reddy felt the hot blood mount to his cheek, and looked away. "I was foolish and rude—and I think you punished me at the time," he stammered. "But you see I was right in saying you looked down on me," he concluded, triumphantly.

This was at best a feeble *sequitur*, but the argument of the affections is not always logical. And it had its effect on the girl.

"I wasn't thinking of *that*," she said. "It's that you don't know your own mind."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"If I said that I would stay and accept your father's offer, would you think that I did?" he asked, quickly.

"I should wait and see what you actually *did* do," she replied.

"But if I stayed—and—and—if I told you that I stayed on *your* account—to be with you and near you only—would you think that a proof?" He spoke hesitatingly, for his lips were dry with a nervousness he had not known before.

"I might, if you told father you expected to be engaged on those terms. For it concerns *him* as much as me. And *he* engages you, and not I. Otherwise I'd think it was only your talk."

Reddy looked at her in astonishment. There was not the slightest trace of coyness, coquetry, or even raillery in her clear, honest eyes, and yet it would seem as if she had taken his proposition in its fullest sense as a matrimonial declaration, and actually referred him to her father. He was pleased, frightened, and utterly unprepared.

"But what would *you* say, Nelly?" He drew closer to her and held out both his hands. But she retreated a step and slipped her own behind her.

"Better see what father says first," she said, quietly. "You may change your mind again and go back to San Francisco."

He was confused, and reddened again. But he had become accustomed to her ways; rather, perhaps, he had begun to recognize the quaint justice that underlaid them, or possibly, some better self of his own that had been buried under bitterness and sloth struggled into life. "But whatever he says," he returned, eagerly, "cannot alter my feelings to *you*. It can only alter my position here, and you say you are above being influenced by that. Tell me, Nelly—dear Nelly! have you nothing to say to me, *as I am*, or is it only to your father's manager that you would speak?" His voice had an unmistakable ring of sincerity in it and even startled him—half rascal as he was!

The young girl's clear, scrutinizing eyes softened; her red resolute lips trembled slightly and then parted, the upper one hovering a little to one side over her white teeth. It was Nelly's own peculiar smile, and its serious piquancy always thrilled him. But she drew a little farther back from his brightening eyes, her hands still curled behind her, and said, with the faintest coquettish toss of her head toward the hill: "If you want to see father, you'd better hurry up."

With a sudden determination as new to him as it was incomprehensible, Reddy turned from her and struck forward in the direction of the hill. He was not quite sure what he was going for. Yet that he, who had only a moment before fully determined to leave the Rancho and her, was now going to her father to demand her hand as a contingency of his remaining, did not strike him as so extravagant and unexpected a *denouement* as it was a difficult one. He was only concerned *how*, and in what way he should approach him. In a moment of embarrassment he hesitated, turned, and looked behind him.

She was standing where he had left her, gazing after him, leaning forward with her hands still held behind her. Suddenly, as with an inspiration she raised them both, carried them impetuously to her lips, blew him a dozen riotous kisses, and then, lowering her head like a colt, whisked her skirt behind her, and vanished in the cover.

III.

It was only May, but the freshness of early summer already clothed the great fields of the Rancho. The old resemblance to a sea was still there, more accented, perhaps, by the undulations of bluish-green grain that rolled from the actual shore-line to the foothills. The farm buildings were half submerged in this glowing tide of color and lost their uncouth angularity with their hidden rude foundations. The same sea-breeze blew chilly and steadily from the bay, yet softened and subdued by the fresher odors of leaf and flower. The outlying fringe of oaks were starred through their underbrush with anemones and dog-roses; there were lupines growing rankly in the open spaces, and along the gentle slopes of Oak Grove daisies were al-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ready scattered. And, as if it were part of this vernal efflorescence, the eminence itself was crowned with that latest flower of progress and improvement—the new Oak Grove Hotel!

Long, low, dazzling with white colonnades, verandas, and balconies which retained, however, enough of the dampness of recent creation to make them too cool for loungers, except at high noon, the hotel, nevertheless had the charms of freshness, youth, and cleanliness. Reddy's fastidious neatness showed itself in all the appointments from the mirrored and marbled bar-room, gilded parlors, and snowy dining-room, to the chintz and maple furnishing of the bedrooms above. Reddy's taste, too, had selected the pretty site; his good fortune had afterward discovered in an adjoining thicket a spring of blandly therapeutic qualities. A complaisant medical faculty of San Francisco attested to its merits; a sympathetic press advertised the excellence of the hotel; a novelty-seeking, fashionable circle—as yet without laws and blindly imitative—found the new hotel an admirable variation to the vulgar ordinary "across the bay" excursion, and an accepted excuse for a novel social dissipation. A number of distinguished people had already visited it; certain exclusive families had secured the best rooms; there were a score of pretty women to be seen in its parlors; there had already been a slight scandal. Nothing seemed wanted to insure its success.

Reddy was passing through the little wood where four months before he had parted from Nelly Woodridge to learn his fate from her father. He remembered that interview to which Nelly's wafted kiss had inspired him. He recalled to-day, as he had many times before, the singular complacency with which Mr. Woodridge had received his suit, as if it were a slight and unimportant detail of the business in hand, and how he had told him that Nelly and her mother were going to the "States" for a three months' visit, but that after her return, if they were both "still agreed," he, Woodridge, would make no objection. He remembered the slight shock which this announcement of Nelly's separation from him during his probationary labors had given him, and his sudden suspicion that he had been partly tricked of his preliminary intent to secure her company to solace him. But he had later satisfied himself that she knew nothing of her father's intentions at the time, and he was fain to content himself with a walk through the fields at her side the day she departed, and a single kiss—which left him cold. And now in a few days she would return to witness the successful fulfilment of his labors, and—reward him!

It was certainly a complacent prospect. He could look forward to a sensible, prosperous, respectable future. He had won back his good name, his fortune and position—not perhaps exactly in the way he had expected—and he had stilled the wanton, foolish cravings of his passionate nature in the calm, virginal love of an honest, handsome girl who would make him a practical helpmeet, and a comfortable, trustworthy wife. He ought to be very happy. He had never known such perfect health before; he had lost his reckless habits; his handsome, nervous face had grown more placid and contented; his long curls had been conventionally clipped; he had gained flesh unmistakably, and the lower buttons of the slim waistcoat he had worn to church that memorable Sunday were too tight for comfort or looks. *He was* happy; yet as he glanced over the material spring landscape, full of practical health, blossom, and promise of fruition, it struck him that the breeze that blew over it was chilly, even if healthful; and he shivered slightly.

He reached the hotel, entered the office, glanced at the register, and passed through into his private room. He had been away for two days and noticed with gratification that the influx of visitors was still increasing. His clerk followed into the room.

"There's a lady in 56 who wanted to see you when you returned. She asked particularly for the manager."

"Who is she?"

"Don't know. It's a Mrs. Merrydew, from Sacramento. Expecting her husband on the next steamer."

"Humph! You'll have to be rather

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DRAWN BY W. L. METCALF.

"But what would *you* say, Nelly?"—Page 575.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

careful about these solitary married women. We don't want another scandal, you know."

"She asked for you by name, sir, and I thought you might know her," returned the clerk.

"Very well. I'll go up."

He sent a waiter ahead to announce him and leisurely mounted the stairs. No. 56 was the sitting-room of a private suite on the first floor. The waiter was holding the door open. As he approached it a faint perfume from the interior made him turn pale. But he recovered his presence of mind sufficiently to close the door sharply upon the waiter behind him.

"Jim," said a voice which thrilled him.

He looked up and beheld what any astute reader of romance will have already suspected—the woman to whom he believed he owed his ruin in San Francisco. She was as beautiful and alluring as ever, albeit she was thinner and more spiritual than he had ever seen her. She was tastefully dressed, as she had always been; a certain style of languorous silken deshabille which she was wont to affect in better health now became her paler cheek and feverishly brilliant eyes. There was the same opulence of lace and ornament, and whether by accident or design—clasped around the slight wrist of her extended hand was a bracelet which he remembered had swept away the last dregs of his fortune.

He took her hand mechanically, yet knowing whatever rage was in his heart he had not the strength to refuse it.

"They told me it was Mrs. Merrydew," he stammered.

"That was my mother's name," she said, with a little laugh. "I thought you knew it. But perhaps you didn't. When I got my divorce from Dick—you didn't know that either I suppose; it's three months ago. I didn't care to take my maiden name again; too many people remembered it. So after the decree was made I called myself Mrs. Merrydew. You had disappeared. They said you had gone East."

"But the clerk says you are expecting your *husband* on the steamer. What does this mean? Why did you tell him that?" He had so far collected himself that there was a ring of inquisition in his voice.

"Oh, I had to give him some kind of reason for my being alone when I did not find you as I expected," she said, half wearily. Then a change came over her tired face; a smile of mingled audacity and tentative coquetry lit up the small features. "Perhaps it is true; perhaps I may have a husband coming on the steamer—that depends. Sit down, Jim."

She let his hand drop and pointed to an arm-chair from which she had just risen and sank down herself in a corner of the sofa, her thin fingers playing with and drawing themselves through the tassels of the cushion.

"You see, Jim, as soon as I was free, Louis Sylvester—you remember Louis Sylvester?—wanted to marry me, and even thought that he was the cause of Dick's divorcing me. He actually went East to settle up some property he had left him there, and he's coming on the steamer."

"Louis Sylvester!" repeated Reddy, staring at her. "Why, he was a bigger fool than I was, and a worse man!" he added, bitterly.

"I believe he was," said the lady, smiling, "and I think he still is. But," she added, glancing at Reddy under her light fringed lids, "you—you're regularly reformed, aren't you? You're stouter, too, and altogether more solid and commercial looking. Yet who'd have thought of your keeping a hotel or ever doing anything but speculate in wild-cat or play at draw poker. How did you drift into it? Come, tell me! I'm not Mrs. Sylvester just yet, and maybe I might like to go into the business too. You don't want a partner, do you?"

Her manner was light and irresponsible, or rather it suggested a child-like putting of all responsibility for her actions upon others, which he remembered now too well. Perhaps it was this which kept him from observing that the corners of her smiling lips, however, twitched slightly, and that her fingers, twisting the threads of the tassel, were occasionally stiffened nervously. For he burst out: Oh, yes; he had

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DRAWN BY W. L. METCALF.

"She sank down herself in a corner of the sofa."—Page 578.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

drifted into it when it was a toss up if it wasn't his body instead that would be found drifting out to sea from the first wharf of San Francisco. Yes, he had been a common laborer, a farm hand, in those fields she had passed—a waiter in the farm kitchen—and but for luck he might be taking her orders now in this very hotel. It was not her fault if he was not in the gutter.

She raised her thin hand with a tired gesture as if to ward off the onset of his words. "The same old Jim," she repeated, "and yet I thought you had forgotten all that now, and become calmer and more sensible since you had taken flesh and grown so matter of fact. You ought to have known then, as you know now, that I never could have been anything to you as long as I was tied to Dick. And you know you forced your presents on me, Jim. I took them from *you* because I would take nothing from Dick, for I hated him. And I never knew positively that you were in straits then; you know you always talked big, Jim, and were always going to make your fortune with the next thing you had in hand!"

It was true, and he remembered it. He had not intended this kind of recrimination, but he was exasperated with her wearied acceptance of his reproaches and by a sudden conviction that his long-cherished grievance against her now that he had voiced it, was inadequate, mean, and trifling. Yet he could not help saying:

"Then you had presents from Sylvester, too. I presume you did not hate him, either?"

"He would have married me the day after I got my divorce."

"And so would I," burst out Reddy.

She looked at him fixedly. "You would?" she said with a peculiar emphasis. "And now?——"

He colored. It had been part of his revengeful purpose on seeing her to tell her of his engagement to Nelly. He now found himself tongue-tied, irresolute, and ashamed. Yet he felt she was reading his innermost thoughts.

She, however, only lowered her eyes, and with the same tired expression said: "No matter now. Let us talk of something nearer. That was two months ago. And so you have charge of this hotel! I like it so much. I mean the place itself. I fancy I could live here forever. It is so far away and restful. I am so sick of towns and cities, and people. And this little grove is so secluded. If one had merely a little cottage here, one might be so happy."

What did she mean?—what did she expect?—what did she think of doing? She must be got rid of before Nelly's arrival, and yet he found himself wavering under her potent and yet scarcely exerted influence. The desperation of weakness is apt to be more brutal than the determination of strength. He remembered why he had come upstairs, and blurted out: "But you can't stay here. The rules are very stringent in regard to—to strangers like yourself. It will be known who you really are and what people say of you. Even your divorce will tell against you. It's all wrong I know—but what can I do? I didn't make the rules. I am only a servant of the landlord, and must carry them out."

She leaned back against the sofa and laughed silently. But she presently recovered herself, although with the same expression of fatigue. "Don't be alarmed, my poor Jim! If you mean your friend, Mr. Woodridge, I know him. It was he, himself, who suggested my coming here. And don't misunderstand him—nor me either. He's only a good friend of Sylvester's; they had some speculation together. He's coming here to see me after Louis arrives. He's waiting in San Francisco for his wife and daughter, who come on the same steamer. So you see you won't get into trouble on my account. Don't look so scared, my dear boy."

"Does he know that you knew me?" said Reddy, with a white face.

"Perhaps. But then that was three months ago," returned the lady, smiling, "and you know how you have reformed since, and grown ever so much more steady and respectable."

"Did he talk to you of me?" continued Reddy, still aghast.

"A little—complimentary of course. Don't look so frightened. I didn't give you away."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Her laugh suddenly ceased, and her face changed into a more nervous activity as she rose and went toward the window. She had heard the sound of wheels outside—the coach had just arrived.

"There's Mr. Woodridge now," she said, in a more animated voice. "The steamer must be in. But I don't see Louis; do you?"

She turned to where Reddy was standing, but he was gone.

The momentary animation of her face changed. She lifted her shoulders with a half gesture of scorn, but in the midst of it suddenly threw herself on the sofa, and buried her face in her hands.

A few moments elapsed with the bustle of arrival in the hall and passages. Then there was a hesitating step at her door. She quickly passed her handkerchief over her wet eyes and resumed her former look of weary acceptation. The door opened. But it was Mr. Woodridge who entered. The rough shirt-sleeved ranchman had developed, during the last four months, into an equally blunt but soberly dressed proprietor. His keen energetic face, however, wore an expression of embarrassment and anxiety, with an added suggestion of a half humorous appreciation of it.

"I wouldn't have disturbed you, Mrs. Merrydew," he said, with a gentle bluntness, "if I hadn't wanted to ask your advice before I saw Reddy. I'm keeping out of his way until I could see you. I left Nelly and her mother in 'Frisco. There's been some queer goings on on the steamer coming home; Nelly has sprung a new game on her mother, and —and suthin' that looks as if there might be a new deal. However," here a sense that he was, perhaps, treating his statement too seriously, stopped him, and he smiled reassuringly, "that is as may be."

"I don't know," he went on, "as I ever told you anything about my Nelly and Reddy. Partik'lerly about Nelly. She's a good girl, a square girl, but she's got some all-fired romantic ideas in her head. Mebbee it kem from her reading, mebbee it kem from her not knowing other girls, or seeing too much of a queer sort of men; but she got an interest in the bad ones, and thought it was her mission to reform them. Reform them by pure kindness, attentive little sisterly ways, and moral example. She first tried her hand on Reddy. When he first kem to us he was—well, he was a blazin' ruin! She took him in hand, yanked him outer himself, put his foot on the bedrock, and made him what you see him now. Well—what happened—why, he got reg'larly soft on her; wanted to *marry her*, and I agreed conditionally, of course, to keep him up to the mark. Did you speak?"

"No," said the lady, with her bright eyes fixed upon him.

"Well, that was all well and good, and I'd liked to have carried out my part of the contract, and was willing, and am still. But you see, Nelly, after she'd landed Reddy on firm ground, got a little tired, I reckon, gal like, of the thing she'd worked so easily, and when she went East she looked around for some other wreck to try her hand on, and she found it on the steamer coming back. And who do you think it was? Why, our friend Louis Sylvester!"

Mrs. Merrydew smiled slightly, with her bright eyes still on the speaker.

"Well, you know he *is* fast at times —if he is a friend of mine—and she reg'larly tackled him; and as my old woman says, it was a sight to see her go for him. But then *he* didn't tumble to it. No! Reformin' ain't in *his* line I'm afeard. And what was the result? Why, Nelly only got all the more keen when she found she couldn't manage him like Reddy—and, between you and me, she'd have liked Reddy more if he hadn't been so easy—and its ended, I reckon, in her now falling dead in love with Sylvester. She swears she won't marry anyone else, and wants to devote her whole life to him! Now, what's to be done! Reddy don't know it yet and I don't know how to tell him. Nelly says her mission was ended when she made a new man of him, and he oughter be thankful for that. Couldn't you kinder break the news to him and tell him there ain't any show for him?"

"Does he love the girl so much, then?" said the lady, gently.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Yes; but I am afraid there is no hope for Reddy as long as she thinks there's a chance of her capturing Sylvester."

The lady rose and went to the writing-table. "Would it be any comfort to you, Mr. Woodridge, if you were told that she had not the slightest chance with Sylvester?"

"Yes."

She wrote a few lines on a card, put it in an envelope and handed it to Woodridge. "Find out where Sylvester is in San Francisco, and give him that card. I think it will satisfy you. And now as I have to catch the return coach in ten minutes, I must ask you to excuse me while I put my things together."

"And you won't first break the news to Reddy for me?"

"No; and I advise you to keep the whole matter to yourself for the present. Good-bye!"

She smiled again, fascinatingly as usual, but, as it seemed to him, a trifle wearily, and then passed into the inner room. Years after, in his practical, matter-of-fact recollections of this strange woman, he always remembered her by this smile.

But she had sufficiently impressed him by her parting adjuration to cause him to answer Reddy's eager inquiries with the statement that Nelly and her mother were greatly preoccupied with some friends in San Francisco, and to speedily escape further questioning. Reddy's disappointment was somewhat mitigated by the simultaneous announcement of Mrs. Merrydew's departure. But he was still more relieved and gratified to hear, a few days later, of the marriage of Mrs. Merrydew with Louis Sylvester. If, to the general surprise and comment it excited, he contributed only a smile of cynical toleration and superior self-complacency, the reader will understand and not blame him. Nor did the public, who knew the austere completeness of his reform. Nor did Mr. Woodridge, who failed to understand the only actor in this little comedy who might perhaps have differed from them all.

A month later James Reddy married Nelly Woodridge, in the chilly little church at Oakdale. Perhaps by that time it might have occurred to him that although the freshness and fruition of summer were everywhere, the building seemed to be still unwarmed. And when he stepped forth with his bride and glanced across the prosperous landscape toward the distant bay and headlands of San Francisco, he shivered slightly at the dryly practical kiss of the keen northwestern Trades.

But he was prosperous and comfortable thereafter, as the respectable owner of broad lands and paying shares. It was said that Mrs. Reddy contributed much to the popularity of the hotel by her charming freedom from prejudice and sympathy with mankind; but this was perhaps only due to the contrast to her more serious, and at times abstracted husband. At least this was the charitable opinion of the proverbially tolerant and kind-hearted Baroness Streichholzer (*née* Merrydew, and relict of the late lamented Louis Sylvester, Esqre.), whom I recently had the pleasure of meeting at Wiesbaden, where the waters and reposeful surroundings strongly reminded her of Oakdale.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DRAWN BY F. S. CHURCH

THE MIRROR

[*Contributed by the artist to the Exhibition Number of Scribner's Magazine.*]

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE UPWARD PRESSURE.

(A CHAPTER FROM THE "HISTORY OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.")

By Walter Besant.

THE most striking part of the great Social Revolution which was witnessed by the earlier years of our century was undoubtedly the event which preceded that Revolution, made it possible, and moulded it; namely, the Conquest of the Professions by the people. Happily it was a Conquest achieved without exciting any active opposition; it advanced unnoticed, step by step, and it was unsuspected, as regards its real significance, until the end was inevitable and visible to all. It is my purpose in this Chapter, first to show what was the position of the mass of the nation before this event, as regards the Professions; and next to relate briefly the successive events which led to the Conquest, and so prepared the way for the abolition of all that was then left of the old aristocratic *régime*.

Speaking in general terms — the exceptions shall be noted afterward — the Professions during the whole of the nineteenth century were jealously barred and closed in and fenced round. Admission, in theory, could only be obtained by young men of gentle birth and good breeding. Not that there was any expressed rule to that effect. It was not written over the gateway of Lincoln's Inn that none but gentlemen were to be admitted, nor was it ever stated in any book or paper that none but gentlemen were to be admitted. But, as you will be shown immediately, the barring of the gate against the lad of humble origin was quite as effectually accomplished without any law, rule, or regulation whatever.

The professional avenues of distinction which, early in the century, were only three or four in number, had, by the end of the century, been multiplied tenfold by the birth or creation of new Professions. Formerly a young man of ambition might go into the Church, into one of the two services, into the Law, or into Medicine. He might also, if he were a country gentleman, go into the House of Commons. At the end of the century the professional career included, besides these, all the various branches of Science, all the forms of Art, all the divisions of Literature, Music, Architecture, the Drama, Engineering, Teaching, Archæology, Political Economy, and, in fact, every conceivable subject to which the mind of man can worthily devote itself.

In all these branches there were great —in some, very great—prizes to be obtained; prizes not always of money, but of honor: in some of them the prizes included what was then considered the greatest of all rewards—a Peerage. The country, indeed, was already beginning to insist that the national distinctions should be bestowed upon all those— and only upon those — who rendered real services to the State. One poet had been made a Peer. One man of science had been made a Privy Councillor, and another a Peer: two painters had been made baronets; and the humble distinction of Knight Bachelor, which had been tossed contemptuously to city sheriffs, provincial mayors, and undistinguished persons who used back-stairs influence to get the title, was now brought into better consideration by being shared by a few musicians, engineers, physicians, and others. Nothing could more clearly show the real contempt in which literature and science were held in an aristocratic country than that, although there were a dozen degrees of peerage and half a dozen orders of knighthood, there was not one order reserved for men of science, literature, and art. Feeble protests from time to time were made against this absurdity, but in the end it proved useful, because the chief argument against the continuance of titles of honor in the great debate on the sub-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ject, in the year 1920, was the fact that all through the nineteenth century the men who most deserved the thanks and recognition of the State were (with the exception of soldiers and lawyers) absolutely neglected by the Court and the House of Lords.

Let us consider by what usages, rather than by what rules, the Professions were barred.

In the Church a young man could not be ordained under the age of twenty-three. Nor would the Bishop ordain him, as a rule, unless he was a graduate of Oxford or Cambridge. This meant that he was to stay at school, and that a good school, till the age of nineteen; that he was then to devote four years more to carrying on his studies in a very expensive manner; in other words, that he must be able to spend at least a thousand pounds before he could obtain orders, and that he would then receive pay at a much lower rate than a good carpenter or engine-driver.

At the Bar it was the custom for a man to enter his name after leaving the University: he would then be called at five or six-and-twenty. A young man must be able to keep himself until that age, and even longer, because a lawyer's practice begins slowly. There were also very heavy dues on entrance and on being called. In plain terms, no young man could enter at the Bar who did not possess or command, at least, a thousand pounds.

In the lower branch of the law a young man might, it is true, be admitted at twenty-one. But he had to pay a heavy premium for his articles, and large fees both at entrance, and on passing the examination which admitted him. Not much less, therefore, including his maintenance, than a thousand pounds would be required of him before he began to make anything for himself. A medical man, even one who only desired to become a humble general practitioner, had to work through a five years' course, with hospital fees. Like the solicitor, he might qualify for about a thousand pounds.

In all the new professions, chemistry, physics, biology, zoölogy, geology, botany, and the other branches of science, engineering, mining, surveying, assaying, architecture, actuary work—everything—a long apprenticeship was needed with special studies in costly colleges.

In Teaching, he who aspired to the more distinguished branches had no chance at all, unless he was a graduate in the highest honors of Oxford and Cambridge.

In the Arts — painting, sculpture, music — long practice, devoted study, and exclusive thought were essential.

The Civil Service was divided into two branches, both open to competitive examination. The higher branch attracted first class men of Oxford and Cambridge; the lower, clever and well-taught men from the Middle Class Schools. But the latter could not pass into the former.

In the Army, the only branch in which a man could live upon his pay was the scientific branch, open to anybody who could compete at a very stiff examination after a long and very expensive course of study, and could pay £200 a year for two or three years after entrance. In the other branches of the services, a young lieutenant could not live upon his pay.

In the Navy the examinations were frequent and severe, while the pay was very small.

The barrier, therefore, which kept the Professions in the hands of the upper classes was a simple toll-gate. At the toll stood a man. "Come," he said, holding out an inexorable palm. "With an education which has cost you already a thousand pounds, be ready to pay down another thousand more. Then you shall be admitted among the ranks of those for whom are reserved the highest prizes of the State; viz., Authority, Honor, and Wealth."

It is apparent, then, that no one could enter the Professions who had no money. No need to write up "None but the sons of gentlemen may apply." Very many sons of gentlemen, in fact, had to turn away sorrowfully after gazing with wistful eyes upon that ladder which they knew that they, too, could climb, as well as a Denman or an Erskine. As for the sons of poor parents, they could not so much as think of the ladder: they hardly knew that it existed: they cared nothing

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

about it. As well sigh for the Lord Mayor's gilt carriage and four, or the Field Marshal's baton. No poor lad could aspire to the Professions at all. In other words, out of a population of thirty-seven millions, or eight millions of families, the way of distinction was open only to the young man belonging to the half million families—perhaps less—who could expend upon their son's education a thousand pounds apiece.

Nor for a long time was the exclusion felt or even recognized. He who wished to rise out of the working class either became a small master of his own trade, or else he opened a small shop of some kind. But he did not aspire to become a physician or a barrister or a clergyman. And it never occurred to him that such a career could be open to him.

But if, as happened every day, such a man had got on in the world and was ambitious for his son, he made him a doctor or a solicitor, these being the two Professions which cost least — or perhaps he made him a mechanical engineer, though it might cost a good deal more. Perhaps if the boy was clever, he managed to send him to the University with the intention of getting him ordained. Such was the first upward step in gentility—first, to become a master instead of a servant; then, to belong to a profession rather than a trade. Always, however, one had to settle with the man at the toll. He was inexorable. "Pay down," he said, "a thousand pounds, if you would be admitted within this bar."

The young man, therefore, whose father worked for wages, or for a small salary, or in a small way of trade, could not so much as dream of entering any of the Professions. They were as much closed to him as the gates of Paradise. But during the nineteenth century a new Profession was created, and this was open to him. This they could not close. It had already grown great and strong before they thought of closing it. It was open to the poor man's son. He went into it. And with the help of it, as with a key, he opened all the rest. You shall understand immediately what this was.

I have spoken of certain exceptions to this exclusion of the lower classes. There were provided at the public schools and the Universities scholarships, founded for the purpose of enabling poor lads to carry on their studies. The schools had long ceased to be the property of the poor for whom they were designed: their scholarships, mostly of recent foundation, were granted by competitive examination to those boys who had already spent a large sum of money on preliminary work. The scholarships of the colleges at Oxford and Cambridge were also given by examination, without the least consideration of the candidates' private resources. There was, however, a chance that a poor lad might get one of these. If he did, everything was open to him. The annals of the Universities contain numberless instances in which lads from the lower middle class made their way, and a few instances—a very few—here one and there one—in which the sons of working-men thus forced themselves upward. We must remember these scholarships when we speak of the barrier, but we must not attach too much importance to them. One may also recall many instances of generosity when a boy of parts was discovered, educated, and sent to the University by a rich or noble patron.

In the Army, again, many men rose from the ranks and obtained commissions. In the Navy, this was always impossible, with one or two brilliant exceptions—as the case of Captain Cook.

It may be said that there are many cases on record in which men of quite humble origin have advanced themselves in trade, even to becoming Lord Mayor of London. Could not a poor lad do in the nineteenth century what Whittington did in the fourteenth? Could he not tie up his belongings in a handkerchief and make for London, where the streets were paved with gold, and the walls were built of jasper? Well, you see, in this matter of the poor lad and his elevation to giddy heights there has been a little mistake, principally due to the chap-books. The poor lad who worked his way upward in the nineteenth century belonged to the bourgeoisie, not the craftsman class. While his schoolfellows remained clerks,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

he, by some early good fortune — by marriage, by cousinship, was enabled to get his foot on the ladder, up which he proceeded to climb with strength and resolution. The poor lad who got on in earlier times was the son of a country gentleman. Dick Whittington was the son of Sir William Whittington, Knight and afterwards outlaw. He was apprenticed to his cousin Sir John Fitzwarren, Mercer and merchant-adventurer, son of Sir William Fitzwarren, Knight. Again, Chichele, Lord Mayor, and his younger brother, Sheriff, and his elder brother Archbishop of Canterbury, were sons of one Chichele, Gentleman and Armiger of Higham Ferrers in the county of Northampton. Sir Thomas Gresham was the son of Sir Richard Gresham, nephew of Sir John Gresham, and younger brother of Sir John Gresham also of a good old country family. In fact, we may look in vain through the annals of London city for the rise of the humble boy from the ranks of the craftsmen. Once or twice, perhaps, one may find such a case. If we consider the early years of the nineteenth century, when the long wars attracted to the army all the younger sons, it does seem as if the Mayors and Aldermen must have come from very humble beginnings. Even then, however, we find on investigation that the city fathers of that time had mostly sprung from small shops. They were never, to begin with, craftsmen, and at the end of the century any such rise was never dreamed of by the most ambitious. The clerk, if a lad became a clerk, remained a clerk: he had no hope of becoming anything else. The shopman remained a shopman, his only hope being the establishment of himself as a master if he could save enough money. The craftsman remained a craftsman. And for partnerships there were always plenty—younger sons and others—eager to buy themselves in, or there were sons and nephews waiting their turn. No son of a working man, or a clerk, could hope for any other advancement in the City than advancement to higher salary for long and faithful service.

Once more, then, the situation was this: To him who could afford to earn nothing till he was two-and-twenty, and little till he was five-and-twenty, and could find the money for fees, lectures, and courses and coaches, everything that the country had to offer was open. With this limitation there was never any country in which prizes were more open than Great Britain and Ireland. A clever lad might enter the Royal Engineers or Artillery with a tolerable certainty of being a Colonel and a K.C.B. at fifty; or he might go into the Church, where if he had ability and had cultivated eloquence and possessed good manners he might count on a Bishopric; or he might go to the Bar, where, if he was lucky, he might become a judge or even Lord Chancellor. Unless however he could provide the capital wanted for admission, he could attain to nothing—nothing—nothing.

What became, then, of the clever lad? In some cases he became a clerk, crowding into a trade already overcrowded. He trampled on his competitors, because most of them, the sons and grandsons of clerks, had no ambition and no perception of the things wanted. This young fellow had. He taught himself the things that were wanted: he generally took therefore the best place. But he had to remain a clerk.

Or, more often, he became a teacher in a Board School. In this capacity he obtained a certain amount of social consideration, a certain amount of independence, and an income varying from £150 to £400 a year.

Or, which also happened frequently, he might become a dissenting minister of the humbler kind. In that case he had every chance of passing through life in a little chapel at a small town, a slave to his own, and to his congregation's, narrow prejudices.

Or, he might go abroad, to one of the Colonies. Earlier in the century, between the years 1850 and 1880 many poor lads had gone to Australia or New Zealand and had done well for themselves, a few had become millionaires; but by the year 1890 these colonies, considered as likely places wherein a young man could advance himself, seemed played out. Workingmen they wanted, but not clever and penniless young fellows.

He might, it has been suggested, go

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

into the House. There were already one or two workingmen in the House. But they were sent there especially to represent certain interests by workingmen; not because their representative was an ambitious and clever young man. And the workingman's member, so far, had advanced a very little way as a political success. It was not in Politics that a young man would find his opening.

This brings us to the one career open to him—he might become a Journalist. It is an attractive Profession: and even in its lower walks it seems a branch of literature. There is independence of hours: the pay depends upon the man's power of work: there are great openings in it and—to the rising lad at least—what seems a noble possibility in the shape of pay. Many distinguished men have been journalists, from Charles Dickens downward. Nearly all the novelists have dabbled with journalism; and, since all of us cannot be novelists, the young man might reflect that there are editors, sub-editors, assistant editors, news-editors, leader writers, descriptive writers, reviewers, dramatic critics, art and music critics, wanted for every paper. He could become a journalist and he could rise to the achievement of these ambitions.

At first he rose a very little way, despite his ambition, because in every branch of letters, imperfect education is an insuperable obstacle. Still he could become news-editor, descriptive reporter, paragraph writer, and even, in the case of country papers, editor. Sometimes he passed from the office of the journal to that of one of the many societies, where he became secretary and succeeded in getting his name associated with some cause, which gave him some position and consideration. Whether he succeeded greatly or not, his whole object was to pass from the class which has no possible future to the class for which everything is open. His sons would be gentlemen, and if he could only find the necessary funds, they should make what he had been unable to make, an attempt upon the prizes of the State.

This was the situation at the beginning of the last decade of the nineteenth century. It is summed up by saying that all the avenues to honor and power were closed and barred to the lad who could not command a thousand pounds at least. Let us pass on.

I have already, in the last chapter, considered the growth and development of the great educational movement whose origin belongs to the nineteenth century; whose development so profoundly affects the history of our own.

It began, like the spread of scientific knowledge, and the reforms in the Old Constitution, and everything else, with the introduction of railways. Before the end of the century the country was covered with schools, as it was also covered with railways. There was hardly a man or woman living when the nineteenth century ended who could not read; there were few indeed who did not read. But the school course naturally taught little beyond the elements and was already completed when the pupil reached his fourteenth year. He was then taken from school and put to work, apprenticed—set to something which was to be his trade. Clever or stupid, keen of intellect or dull, that was to be the lot of the boy. He was set to learn how to earn his livelihood.

About the year 1885 or 1890—no exact date can be fixed for the birth of a new idea—began a very remarkable extension of the educational movement. It was discovered by philanthropists that something ought to be done with the boys after they had left school. The first intentions seem to have been simply to keep them out of mischief. Having nothing to do the lads naturally took to loafing about the streets, smoking bad tobacco, drinking, gambling, and precocious love-making. It was also perceived by economists about the same time that unless something was done for technical education, the old superiority of the British craftsman would speedily vanish. It was further pointed out that the education of the Board Schools gave the pupils little more than the mastery of the merest elements, the tools by means of which knowledge could be acquired. In order, therefore, to carry on general education and to provide technical training there were started simultaneously in every great town, but especially in Lon-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

don, Technical Schools, "Continuation" Classes, Polytechnics, Young Men's Associations and Clubs, Guilds for instruction and recreation—under whatever form they were known they were all schools.

Then the young working lad was invited to enter himself at one of these places, and to spend his evenings there. "Come," said the founders, "you are at an age when everything is new and everything is delightful. Give up all your present joys. Send the girl with whom you keep company, night after night, home to her mother. Put down your cherished cigarette, cease to stand about in bars, give up drinking beer, go no more to the music-hall. Abandon all that you delight in. And come to us. After working all day long at your trade, come to us and work all the evening at books."

A strange invitation! To forego delights and live laborious evenings. Stranger still, the lads accepted the invitation. They accepted in thousands. They consented to work every evening as well as every day. The inducements to join were, in fact, artfully devised with a full knowledge of boys' nature. What a boy desires, over and above everything else, more than the company of a girl, more than idleness, more than gambling, more than beer-drinking, more than tobacco, is association with other lads of the same age. These Polytechnics or Institutes or Clubs gave him, first of all, that association. They provided him with societies of every kind. They added recreation to study; pleasure to work. If half of the evening was spent in a class-room, or in a workshop, the other half was passed in orderly amusement. There was, moreover, every kind of choice; the lad felt himself free; there were, to be sure, barriers here and there, but he did not feel them; there was a steady pressure upon him in certain directions, but he did not feel it; in some there were prayer-meetings; the boys were not obliged to go, but some time or other they found themselves present. Then there were some who wore the blue ribbon of temperance; nobody was obliged to assume that symbol, but somehow most of them did, without feeling that they had been pressed to do so. For the very work and life and atmosphere of the place into which beer was not admitted gave them a dislike for beer, with its coarse and rough associations. Insensibly the boy who joined was led upward to a nobler and higher level.

The motives which were strong enough to persuade a working lad to work on, over hours, may be partly understood by considering one of these Institutions—the largest and the most popular—the Polytechnic of Regent Street, called familiarly the Regent Street "Poly," with its thirteen thousand members. Take first its social side, as offering naturally greater attractions than its educational side. It contained about forty clubs. The new member on joining was asked in a pamphlet these three questions:

1. "Do you wish to make friends?"
2. "Are you anxious to improve yourself?"
3. "Do you seek the best opportunities of recreation in your leisure hours?"

Observe that the serious object is placed between the other two. What the Poly lads said to the new member was: "Come in and have a good old time with us." It was for the good old time that the new member joined. Once in he could look about him and choose. The Gymnasium, the Boxing club, the Swimming Club, the Roller-skating Club, the Cricket, Football, Lawn Tennis, Athletic, Rowing, Cycling, Ramblers and Harriers Clubs all invited him to join. Surely, among so many clubs there must be one that he would like. Of course they had their showy uniform, their envied Captains and other officers, their field days, their public days, and their prizes. Or there was the Volunteer Corps, with its Artillery Brigade, and its Volunteer Medical Staff Corps. There was the Parliament, conducted on the same rules as that of the House of Commons. For the quieter lads there were Sketching, Natural History, Photographic, Orchestral, and Choral Societies. There was a Natural History Society and an Electrical Engineering Society. There were also associations for religious and moral objects; a Christian Workers'

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Union, a Temperance Society, a Social League, a Polytechnic Mission, and a Bible Class. There were reading-rooms and refreshment-rooms; in the suburbs there were playing fields for them. Up the river was a house-boat for the Rowing Club, the largest on the Thames. Add to all this an intense "College feeling;" an ardent enthusiasm for the Poly; friendships the most faithful; a wholesome, invigorating, stimulating atmosphere; the encouragement always felt of brave endeavor and noble effort, and high principle—in one word, the gift to the young fellows of the working class of all that the public schools and universities could offer that was best and most precious. Such an institution as the Polytechnic—mother and sister of so many others—was a revolution in itself.

But for the second question: "Are you anxious to improve yourself?" What answer was given? Strange to say the answer was also very decidedly in the affirmative.

The young fellows were anxious to improve themselves. Now mark the difference between these working lads and the boys from the public schools. Had such a question been put to the latter their answer would have been a contemptuous stare, or a contemptuous laugh. Improve themselves? They were already improved. They were so far improved that nine-tenths of them were contented with the moderate amount of knowledge necessary for the practice of their professions. If one became a solicitor, a doctor, a schoolmaster, a barrister, a clergyman, it was sufficient for him, in most cases, just to pass the examinations. Then, no further improvement for the rest of their natural life. But these others, who had everything to gain, whose ambitions were just awakening, who were just beginning to understand that there was every inducement to improve themselves, joined the classes and began to work, with as much zeal as they showed in their play.

What they learned concerns us little. It may be recorded, however, that they learned everything. Practical trades were taught; technical classes were held; there was a School of Science in which such subjects as chemistry, physics, mathematics, mechanics, building were taught. There was a School of Art in which wood modelling, carving, and other minor arts were taught, as well as painting and drawing. There was a Commercial School for Arithmetic, Book-keeping, Shorthand, Typewriting, French, German, etc., were taught; there were Musical Classes, Elocution Classes, a School of Engineering, a School of Photography. Enough; it will be seen that everything a lad might desire to learn he could learn and did learn.

But the Polytechnic was only one of many such institutions. In London alone there existed, in the year 1893, between two and three hundred, large and small; there were nearly fifty branches of the University Extension scheme; the Continuation classes were held in many Board Schools, while of special clubs, mostly for athletic purposes, the number was legion. As for the numbers enrolled in these associations, already in 1893, when those things were all young, one finds 13,000 members of the Regent Street Poly; 4,000 at the People's Palace; the same number at the Birkbeck; the same at the Goldsmith's Institute; at the City of London College, 2,500; and so on. Of the Athletic Clubs the Cyclists' Union alone contained no fewer than 20,000 members.

Figures may mean anything. It is, however, significant that in a population of five millions, which gives perhaps 700,000 young men between fifteen and twenty, of whom about 100,000 were below the rank of craftsmen, and 100,000 above, there should have been found a few years after the introduction of the system, about 70,000 youths wise enough and resolute enough to join these classes.

It must be owned that only the more generous spirits—the nobler sort—were attracted by the Polytechnics. They were a first selection from the mass. Of these again, another selection was made: those few who studied the things which at first sight appeared to be least useful. Everyone who knew a craft could see the wisdom of acquiring perfection in his trade; everyone who was a clerk, or who hoped to become a clerk,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

could see the advantage of learning shorthand, book-keeping, French and German. What did that boy aim at who studied Latin, Greek, and Mathematics, matriculated and took his degree at the London University, then an examining body only? Why did he learn these things? He did not learn them, remember, in the perfunctory way in which a public school boy generally works through his subjects; he learned as if he meant to know these subjects; he devoured his books; he tore the heart out of them; he compelled them to give up their secrets. He had everything to get for himself while the public school boy had everything given to him.

When it was done, when he had acquired as much knowledge as any average boy from the best public school; when he had read in the Poly Reading Room all that there was to read, what was he to do? For when he looked about him he saw, stretching before him, fair and stately, the long avenues which led to distinction—but before each there was a toll-gate and at the gate stood a man saying, "Pay me first a thousand pounds. Then, and not till then, you shall enter."

Alas! and he had not a sixpence—he, or his parents. And so perforce he must stand aside while other lads without his intellect and courage paid the money and were admitted.

There was but one outlet. He might become a journalist. He had learned shorthand, a necessary accomplishment. Therefore, he got an appointment as reporter and general hand on a country paper. Such a youth, in these years of which we write was uncommon, but he very soon became much more common. The charm of learning was discovered by one lad after another. The chance of exchanging the craftsman's work for the scholar's work, never thought of before, fired the brains of hundreds first, and thousands afterward. Then began a rage for learning. All those who had abilities even mediocre tried to escape their lot by working at the higher subjects. It was reproached to the Polytechnics that their original purpose, to bring the boys together for common discipline and orderly recreation, and to train them in their crafts, was departed from, and that all their energies were now devoted to turning working lads into classical scholars, mathematicians, logicians, and historians.

Nor was the complaint wholly unfounded. But it was too late to recede. The boys crowded to the classes; they read and worked with incredible eagerness; they thought that to be a man of books was better than to be a man with a saw and a plane. Ambition seized them—seized them by tens of thousands; they would rise. Learning was their stepping-stone. The recreative side of the Polytechnics was lost in the educational side. Never before had there been such an ardor, such a thirst for knowledge. Yet only for knowledge as a means to rise. And there was but one outlet. That, in the course of a few years, became congested. Journalism, as the number of papers increased, demanded more workmen, and still more. These young men from the Polytechnic filled up every vacancy. They had seized upon this profession and made it their own; those who did not belong to them were gradually, but surely, ousted. It was recognized that it was the profession of the young man who wanted to get on. Some there were who affected to lament an alleged decay; the old scholarly style, they said, was gone; there was also gone the old reverence for authority, rank, and the established order. Perhaps the journal, as the new men made it, was above all vigorous. But it was *true*, which could not always be said of the papers before their time. From their college—the old Poly—the young men carried away a love of truth and right dealing which, once imported into the newspaper press, made it an engine far more mighty—an influence far more potent—than ever it had been before. There may have been some loss in style, though many of them wrote gracefully and many showed on occasion a wonderful command of wit, sarcasm, and satire. But because the papers were always truthful the writers always knew what they wanted and so their work had the strength of directness.

A few, but very few, continued at the work, whatever it might be, to which they had been apprenticed. Then their

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lives were spent in a day of painful drudgery followed by an evening of delightful study. Very few heard of these men. Now and then one would be discovered by a clergyman working in his parish; now and then one emerged from obscurity by means of a letter or a paper contributed to some journal. Most of them lived and died unknown.

Yet there was one. His case is remarkable because it first set rolling the ball of reform. He was by trade a metal turner and fitter; he had the reputation of being an unsociable man because he went home every day after work and stayed there; he was unmarried and lived alone in a small, four-roomed cottage near Kilburn, one of a collection of Workman's villages. Here it was known that he had a room which he had furnished with a furnace, a table, shelves and bottles, and that he worked every evening at something. One day there appeared in a scientific paper an article containing an account of certain discoveries of the greatest importance, signed by a name utterly unknown to scientific men. The article was followed by others, all of the greatest interest and originality. The man himself had little idea of the importance of his own discoveries. When his cottage was besieged by leaders in the world of science, he was amazed; he showed his simple laboratory to his visitors; he spoke of his labors carelessly; he told them that he was a metal turner by trade, that he worked every day for an employer at a wage of thirty-five shillings a week, and that he was able to devote his evenings to reading and research. They made him an F.R.S., the first working man who had ever attained that honor. They tried to get him put upon the Civil List, but the First Lord of the Treasury had already, according to the usual custom, given away the annual grant made by the House for Literature, Science and Art, to the widows and daughters of Civil servants. This attempt failing, the Royal Society, in order to take him away from his drudgery, created a small sinecure post for him, and in this way found an excuse for giving him a pension.

Then some writer in a London Daily asked how it was that with his genius for science, which, it was now recalled, had been remarked while he was a student at the South London Poly, this man had been allowed to remain at his trade.

And the answer was, "Because there is no opening for such an one."

It is very astonishing, when we consider the obvious nature of certain truths, to remark how slow man is to find them out. Now this exclusion of all those who could not afford to pay his toll to the man at the gate, had, up to that moment, been accepted as if it were a law of Nature. As in other things, men said, if they talked about the matter at all, "What is, must be. What is, shall be. What is, has always been. What is, has been ordained by God himself." There is nothing more difficult than to effect a reform in men's minds. The reformer has, first, to persuade people to listen. Sometimes he never succeeds, even in this, the very beginning. When they do listen, the thing, being new to them, irritates them. They therefore call him names. If he persists they call him worse names. If they can they put him in prison, hang him, burn him. If they cannot do this, and he goes on preaching new things, they presently begin to listen with more respect. One or two converts are made. The reformer expands his views; his demands become larger; his claims far exceed the modest dimensions of his first timid words. And so the reform, bit by bit, is effected.

At first, then, the demand was for nothing more than an easier entrance into the scientific world. This naturally rose out of the case. "Let us," they said, "take care that to such a man as this any and every branch of science shall be thrown open. But for that purpose it is necessary that scholarships, whether given at school or college, shall be sufficient for the maintenance as well as for the tuition fees of those who hold them." These scholarships, it was argued, had been founded for poor students and belonged to them. All the papers took up the question, and all, with one or two exceptions, were in favor of "restoring"—that was the phrase—"his scholarships;" "his," it was said, assuming that they were his

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

originally—to the poor man. In vain was it pointed out that these scholarships had been for the most part founded in recent times when public schools and universities had long become the property of the richer class, and that they were needed as aids for those who were not rich, not as means of maintenance for those who wanted to rise out from one class into another.

The cry was raised at the general Election: the majority came into power pledged to the hilt to restore his scholarships to the poor student. Then, of course, a compromise was effected. There was created a class of scholarships at certain public schools, for which candidates had to produce evidence that they possessed nothing, and that their parents would not assist them. Similar scholarships were created at Oxford and Cambridge, out of existing revenues, and it was hoped that concessions opening all the advantages that the public schools and universities had to give would prove sufficient. By this time the country was fully awakened to the danger of having thrown upon their hands a great class of young men who thought themselves too well educated for any of the lower kinds of work, and were too numerous for the only work open to them. No one, as yet, it must be remembered, had ventured to propose throwing open the Professions.

The concessions were found, however, to make very little difference. Now and then a lad with a scholarship forced his way to the head of a public school, and carried off the highest honors at the University. Mostly, however, the poor scholar was uncomfortable; he could neither speak, nor think, nor behave like his fellows; the atmosphere chilled him; too often he failed to justify the early promise; if he succeeded in getting a "poor" scholarship at college, he too often ended his University career with second-class Honors, which were of no use to him at all, and so he was again face to face with the question: What to do? His college would not continue to support him. He could not get a mastership in a good school because there was a prejudice against "poor" scholars, who were supposed incapable of acquiring the manners of a gentleman. So he, too, fell back upon the only outlet, and tried to become a journalist.

Every day the pressure increased; the pay of the journalist went down; work could be got for next to nothing, and still the lads poured into the classes by the thousand, all hoping to exchange the curse of labor by their hands for that of labor by the pen. No one as yet had perceived the great truth which has so enormously increased the happiness of our time, that all labor is honorable and respectable, though to some kinds of labor we assign greater, and some lesser, honor. The one thought was to leave the ranks of the workingman.

It is not to be supposed that this great class would suffer and starve in silence. On the contrary, they were continually proclaiming their woes; the papers were filled with letters and articles. "What shall we do with our boys?" was the heading that one saw every day, somewhere or other. What, indeed! No one ventured to say that they had better go back to their trade; no one ventured to point out that a man might be a good cabinet-maker although he knew the Integral Calculus. If one timidly asked what good purpose was gained by making so many scholars, that man was called Philistine, first; obstructive, next; and other stronger names afterward. And yet no one ventured to point out that all the professions—and not science only, through the universities—might be thrown open.

Sooner or later this suggestion was certain to be made. It appeared, first of all, in an unsigned letter addressed to one of the evening papers. The writer of the letter was almost certainly one of the suffering class. He began by setting forth the situation, as I have described it above, quite simply and truly. He showed, as I have shown, that the Professions and the Services were closed to those who had no money. And he advanced for the first time the audacious proposal that they should be thrown open to all on the simple condition of passing an examination. "This examination," he said, "may be made as severe as can be desired or devised. There is no examina-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion so severe that the students of our Polytechnics cannot face and pass it triumphantly. Let the examination, if you will, be intended to admit none but those who have taken or can take first-class Honors. The Poly students need not fear to face a standard even so high as this. Why should the higher walks of life be reserved for those who have money to begin with? Why should money stand in the way of honor? Among the thousands of young men who have profited by the opportunities offered to them there must be some who are born to be lawyers; some who are born to be doctors; some who are born to be preachers; some who are born to be administrators." And so on, at length. It was not, however, by a letter in a paper, or by the leading articles and the correspondence which followed that the suggested change was effected. But the idea was started. It was talked about; it grew: as the pressure increased it grew more and more. Meetings were held at which violent speeches were delivered: the question of opening the Professions was declared of national importance; at the General Election which followed some months after the appearance of the letter, members were returned who were pledged to promote the immediate throwing open of all the Professions to all who could pass a certain examination; and the first step was taken in opening all commissions in the Army to competitive examination.

The Professions, however, remained obstinate. Law and Medicine refused to make the least concession. It was not until an Act of Parliament compelled them that the Inns of Court, the Law Institute, the Colleges of Physicians, Surgeons, and Apothecaries consented to admit all-comers without fees and by examination alone.

Then followed such a rush into the Professions as had never before been witnessed. Already too full, they became at once absolutely congested and choked. Every other man was either a doctor or a solicitor. It was at first thought that by making examinations of the greatest severity possible the rush might be arrested. But this proved impossible, for the simple reason that an examination for admission, necessarily a mere "pass" examination must be governed and limited by the intellect of the average candidate. Moreover, in Medicine, if too severe an examination is proposed, the candidate sacrifices actual practice and observation in the Hospital wards to book-work. Therefore the examinations remained much as they always had been, and all the clever lads from all the Polytechnics became, in an incredibly short time, members of the Learned Professions.

There can be no doubt that the Bench and the Bar, that Medicine and Surgery, owe to the emancipation of the Professions many of their noblest members. Great names occur to every one which belong to this and that Polytechnic, and are written on the walls in letters of gold as an encouragement to succeeding generations. One would not go back to the old state of things. At the same time there were losses and there are regrets. So great, for instance, was the competition in Medicine that the sixpenny General Practitioner established himself everywhere, even in the most fashionable quarters; so numerous were solicitors that the old system of a recognized tariff was swept away and gave place to open competition as in trade. That the two branches of the law should be fused into one was inevitable; that the splendid incomes formerly derived from successful practice should disappear was also a matter of course. And there were many who regretted not only the loss of the old professional rules and the old incomes, but also the old professional *esprit de corps*—the old jealousy for the honor and dignity of the profession: the old brotherhood. All this was gone. Every man's hand was against his neighbor; advocates sent in contracts for the job; the physicians undertook a case for so much; the surgeon operated for a contract price; the usages of trade were all transferred to the Professions.

As for the Services, the Navy remained an aristocratic body; boys were received too young for the Polytechnic lads to have a chance; also, the pay was too small to tempt them, and the work was too scientific. In the Army a few appeared from time to time, but it cannot

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

be said that as officers the working-classes made a good figure. They were not accustomed to command; they were wanting in the manners of the camp as well as those of the court; they were neither polished enough nor rough enough; the influence of the Poly might produce good soldiers—obedient, high-principled, and brave; but it could not produce good officers, who must be, to begin with, lads born in the atmosphere of authority, the sons of gentlemen or the sons of officers. Yet even here there were exceptions. Every one, for instance, will remember the case of the general—once a Poly boy—who successfully defended Herat against an overwhelming host of Russians in the year 1935.

It was not enough to throw open the Professions. Some there were in which, whether they were thrown open or not, a new-comer without family or capital or influence could never get any work. Thus it would seem that Engineering was a profession very favorable to such new-comers. It proved the contrary. All engineers in practice had pupils—sons, cousins, nephews—to whom they gave their appointments. To the new-comer nothing was given. What good, then, had been effected by this revolution? Nothing but the crowding into the learned Professions of penniless, clever lads? Nothing but the destruction of the old dignity and self-respect of Law and Medicine? Nothing but the degradation of a Profession to the competition of trade?

Much more than this had been achieved. The Democratic movement which had marked the nineteenth century received its final impulse from this great change. Everyone knows that the House of Lords, long before the end of that century, had ceased to represent the old aristocracy. The old names were, for the most part, extinct. A Cecil, a Stanley, a Howard, a Neville, a Bruce, might yet be found, but by far the greater part of the Peers were of yesterday. Nor could the House be kept up at all but for new creations. They were made from rich trade or from the Law, the latter conferring respect and dignity upon the House. But lawyers could no longer be made Peers. They were rough in manners, and they had no longer great incomes. Moreover, the nation demanded that its honors should be equally bestowed upon all those who rendered service to the State, and all were poor. Now a House of poor Lords is absurd. Equally absurd is a House of Lords all brewers. Hence the fall of the House of Lords was certain. In the year 1924 it was finally abolished.

In the next chapter I propose to relate what followed this rush into the Professions. We have seen how the grant of the higher education to working lads caused the Conquest of the Professions and brought about the change I have indicated. We have seen how this revolution was bound to sweep away in its course the last relics of the old aristocratic constitution of the country. It remains to be told how learning, when it became the common possession of all clever lads, ceased to be a possession by which money could be made, except by the very foremost. Then the boys went back to their trades. If the reign of the gentleman is over, the learning and the power and culture that has belonged to the gentleman now belongs to the craftsman. This, at least, must be admitted to be pure gain. For one man who read and studied and thought one hundred years ago, there are now a thousand. Editions of good books are now issued by a hundred thousand at a time. The Professions are still the avenues to honors. Still, as before, the men whom the people respect, are the followers of science, the great Advocate, the great Preacher, the great Engineer, the great Surgeon, the great Dramatist, the great Novelist, the great Poet. That the national honors no longer take the form of the Peerage will not, I think, at this hour, be admitted to be a subject for regret by even the stanchest Conservative.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE FIDDLER OF THE REELS.

By Thomas Hardy.

THE ILLUSTRATION BY W. HATHERELL.

"TALKING of Exhibitions, World's Fairs, and what not," said the old gentleman, "I would not go round the corner to see a dozen of them nowadays. The only exhibition that ever made, or ever will make, any impression upon my imagination was the first of the series, the parent of them all, and now a thing of old times—the Great Exhibition of 1851, in Hyde Park, London. None of the younger generation can realize the sense of novelty it produced in us who were then in our prime. A noun substantive went so far as to become an adjective in honor of the occasion. It was 'exhibition' hat, 'exhibition' razor-strop, 'exhibition' watch; nay, even 'exhibition' weather, 'exhibition' spirits, sweethearts, babies, wives—for the time.

"For South Wessex, the year formed in many ways an extraordinary chronological frontier or transit-line, at which there occurred what one might call a precipice in Time. As in a geological 'fault,' we had presented to us a sudden bringing of ancient and modern into absolute contiguity, such as probably in no other single year since the Conquest was ever witnessed in this part of the country."

These observations led me onward to think of the different personages, gentle and simple, who lived and moved within our narrow and peaceful horizon at that time; and of three people in particular, whose queer little history was oddly touched at points by the Exhibition, more concerned with it than that of anybody else who dwelt in those outlying shades of the world, Stickleford, Mellstock and Egdon. First in order among these three comes Wat Ollamoor—if that were his real name.

He was a woman's man—supremely so—and externally very little else. To men he was not attractive; perhaps not repulsive; merely, in his better moments, tolerable. Musician, dandy, and company-man in practice; veterinary surgeon in theory, he lodged awhile in Mellstock village, coming from nobody knew where; though some said his first appearance in this neighborhood had been as fiddle-player in a show at Greenhill Fair.

Many a worthy villager envied him his power over unsophisticated maidenhood—a power which seemed sometimes to have a touch of the weird and wizardly in it. Personally he was not ill-favored, though rather un-English, his complexion being a rich olive, his rank hair dark and rather clammy—made still clammier by secret ointments, which, when he came fresh to a party, caused him to smell like "boys'-love" (southernwood) steeped in lamp-oil. He wore curls—a double row—running almost horizontally around his head. But as these were sometimes noticeably absent, it was concluded that they were not of Nature's making, but his own. By girls whose love for him had turned to hatred he had been nicknamed "Mop," from this abundance of hair, which was long enough to rest upon his shoulders; as time passed, the name more and more prevailed.

His fiddling possibly had the most to do with the fascination he exercised, for, to speak fairly, it could claim for itself a most peculiar and personal quality, like that in a moving preacher. There were tones in it which bred the immediate conviction that indolence and averseness to systematic application were all that lay between "Mop" and the career of a second Paganini.

While playing he closed his eyes—invariably; using no notes, and, as it were, allowing the violin to wander on at will into the most plaintive passages ever heard by rustic man. There was a certain lingual character in the supplicatory expressions he produced,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which would well-nigh draw an ache from the heart of a gate-post. He could make any child in the parish, who was at all sensitive to music, burst into tears in a few minutes by simply fiddling one of the old dance-tunes he almost entirely affected — country jigs, reels, and "Favorite Quick Steps" of the last century — some mutilated remains of which even now reappear as nameless phantoms in new quadrilles and gallops, where they are recognized only by the curious, or by such old-fashioned and far-between people as have been thrown with men like Wat Ollamoor in their early life.

His date was a little later than that of the old Mellstock quire-band which comprised the Dewys, Mail, and the rest—in fact, he did not rise above the horizon thereabout till those well-known musicians were disbanded as ecclesiastical functionaries. In their honest love of thoroughness they despised the new man's style. Theophilus Dewy, Reuben the tranter's younger brother, used to say there was no "plumness" in it—no bowing, no solidity—it was all fantastical. And probably this was true. Anyhow, Mop had, very obviously, never bowed a note of church-music from his birth—never once sat in the gallery of Mellstock church where the others had tuned their venerable psalmody so many hundreds of times; had never, in all likelihood, entered a church at all. All were devil's tunes in his repertory. "He could no more play the Wold Hundredth to his true time than he could play the brazen serpent," the tranter would say. (The brazen serpent was supposed in Mellstock to be a musical instrument particularly hard to blow.)

Occasionally Mop could produce the aforesaid moving effect upon the souls of grown-up persons, especially young women of fragile and responsive organization. Such an one was Car'line Aspent. Though she was already engaged to be married before she met him, Car'line, of them all, was the most influenced by Mop Ollamoor's soul-stealing melodies, to her discomfort, nay, positive pain and ultimate injury. She was a pretty, invocating, weak-mouthed girl, whose chief defect as a companion with her sex was a tendency to peevishness now and then. At this time she was not a resident in Mellstock parish where Mop lodged, but lived some miles off at Stickleford, farther down the river.

How and where she first made acquaintance with him and his fiddling is not truly known, but the story was that it either began or was developed on one spring evening, when, in passing through Lower Mellstock, she chanced to pause on the bridge near his house to rest herself, and languidly leaned over the parapet. Mop was standing on his door-step, as was his custom, spinning the insidious thread of semi- and demi-semiquavers from the E string of his fiddle for the benefit of passers-by, and laughing as the tears rolled down the cheeks of the little children hanging around him. Car'line pretended to be engrossed with the rippling of the stream under the arches, but in reality she was listening, as he knew. Presently the aching of the heart seized her simultaneously with a wild desire to glide airily in the mazes of an infinite dance. To shake off the fascination she resolved to go on, although it would be necessary to pass him as he played; however, on stealthily glancing ahead at the performer, she found to her relief that his eyes were closed in abandonment, and she strode on boldly. But when closer her step grew timid, her tread convulsed itself more and more accordantly with the time of the melody, till she very nearly danced along. Gaining another glance at him when immediately opposite, she saw that *one* of his eyes was open, quizzing her as he smiled at her emotional state. Her gait could not divest itself of its compelled capers till she had gone a long way past the house; and Car'line was unable to shake off the strange infatuation for hours. After that day, whenever there was to be in the neighborhood a dance to which she could get an invitation, and where Mop Ollamoor was to be the musician, Car'line contrived to be present, though it sometimes involved a walk of several miles; for he did not play so often in Stickleford as elsewhere.

The next evidences of his influence over her were singular enough, and it would require a neurologist to fully ex-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

plain them. She would be sitting quietly, any evening after dark, in the house of her father, the parish clerk, which stood in the middle of Stickleford village street, this being the highroad between Lower Mellstock and Moreford, six miles eastward. Here, without a moment's warning, and in the midst of a general conversation between her father, sister, and the young man before alluded to, who devotedly wooed her in ignorance of her infatuation, she would start from her seat in the chimney-corner as if she had received a galvanic shock, and spring convulsively several times ; then she would burst into tears, and it was not till some half-hour had passed that she grew calm as usual. Her father, knowing her hysterical tendencies, was always excessively anxious about this trait in his youngest girl, and feared the attack to be a species of epileptic fit. Not so her sister Julia. Julia had found out what was the cause. At the moment before the jumping, only an exceptionally sensitive ear situated in the chimney-nook could have caught from down the flue the beat of a man's footstep along the highway without. But it was in that footfall, for which she had been waiting, that the origin of Car'line's involuntary springing lay. The pedestrian was Mop Ollamoor, as the girl well knew ; but his business that way was not to visit her ; he sought another woman whom he spoke of as his intended, and who lived at Moreford, two miles farther on. On one, and only one, occasion did it happen that Car'line could not control her utterance ; it was when her sister alone chanced to be present. "Oh—oh—oh!" she cried. "He's going to her, and not coming to me!"

To do the fiddler justice, he had not at first thought greatly of, or spoken much to, this girl of impressionable mould. But he had soon found out her secret, and could not resist a little by-play with her too easily hurt heart, as an interlude between his more serious performances at Moreford. The two became well acquainted, though only by stealth, hardly a soul in Stickleford except her sister, and her lover Ned Hipcroft, being aware of the attachment. Her father disapproved of her coldness to Ned ; her sister, too, hoped she might get over this nervous passion for a man of whom so little was known. The ultimate result was that Car'line's manly and simple wooer Edward, found his suit becoming practically hopeless. He was a respectable mechanic, in a far sounder position than Mop, the nominal horse-doctor ; but when, before leaving her, he put his flat and final question, would she marry him, then and there, now or never, it was with little expectation of obtaining more than the negative she gave him. Though her father supported him and her sister supported him, he could not play the fiddle so as to draw your soul out of your body like a spider's thread, as Mop did, till you felt as limp as withy-wind and yearned for something to cling to. Indeed, Hipcroft had not the slightest ear for music ; could not sing two notes in tune, much less play them.

The No he had expected and got from her, in spite of a preliminary encouragement, gave him a new start in life. It had been uttered in such a tone of sad entreaty that he resolved to persecute her no more ; she should not even be distressed by a sight of his form in the distant perspective of the street and lane. He left the place, and his natural course was to London.

The railway to South Wessex was in process of construction, but it was not as yet opened for traffic ; and Hipcroft reached the capital by a six days' trudge on foot, as many a better man had done before him. He was one of the last of the artisan class who used that now extinct method of travel to the great centres of labor, so customary then from time immemorial.

In London he lived and worked regularly at his trade. More fortunate than many, his disinterested willingness recommended him from the first. During the ensuing four years he was never out of employment. He neither advanced nor receded in the modern sense ; he improved as a workman, but he did not shift one jot in social position. About his love for Car'line he maintained a rigid silence. No doubt he often thought of her ; but being always occupied, and having no relations at Stickleford, he held no communication with that part of the country, and showed no desire to return. In his

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

quiet lodging in Lambeth he moved about after working-hours with the facility of a woman, doing his own cooking, attending to his stocking-heels, and shaping himself by degrees to a life-long bachelorhood. For this conduct I am bound to advance the canonic reason that time could not efface from his heart the image of little Car'line Aspent—and it may be in part the true one; but there was also the inference that his was a nature not greatly dependent upon the ministrations of the other sex for its comforts.

The fourth year of his residence as a mechanic in London was the year of the Hyde Park Exhibition already mentioned, and at the construction of this huge glass-house, then unexampled in the world's history, he worked daily. It was an era of great hope and activity among the nations and industries, but though Hipcroft was, in his small way, a central man in the movement, he plodded on with his usual outward placidity. Yet for him, too, the year was destined to have its surprises, for when the bustle of getting the building ready for the opening day was past, the ceremonies had been witnessed, and people were flocking thither from all parts of the globe, he received a letter from Car'line. Till that day the silence of four years between himself and Stickleford had never been broken.

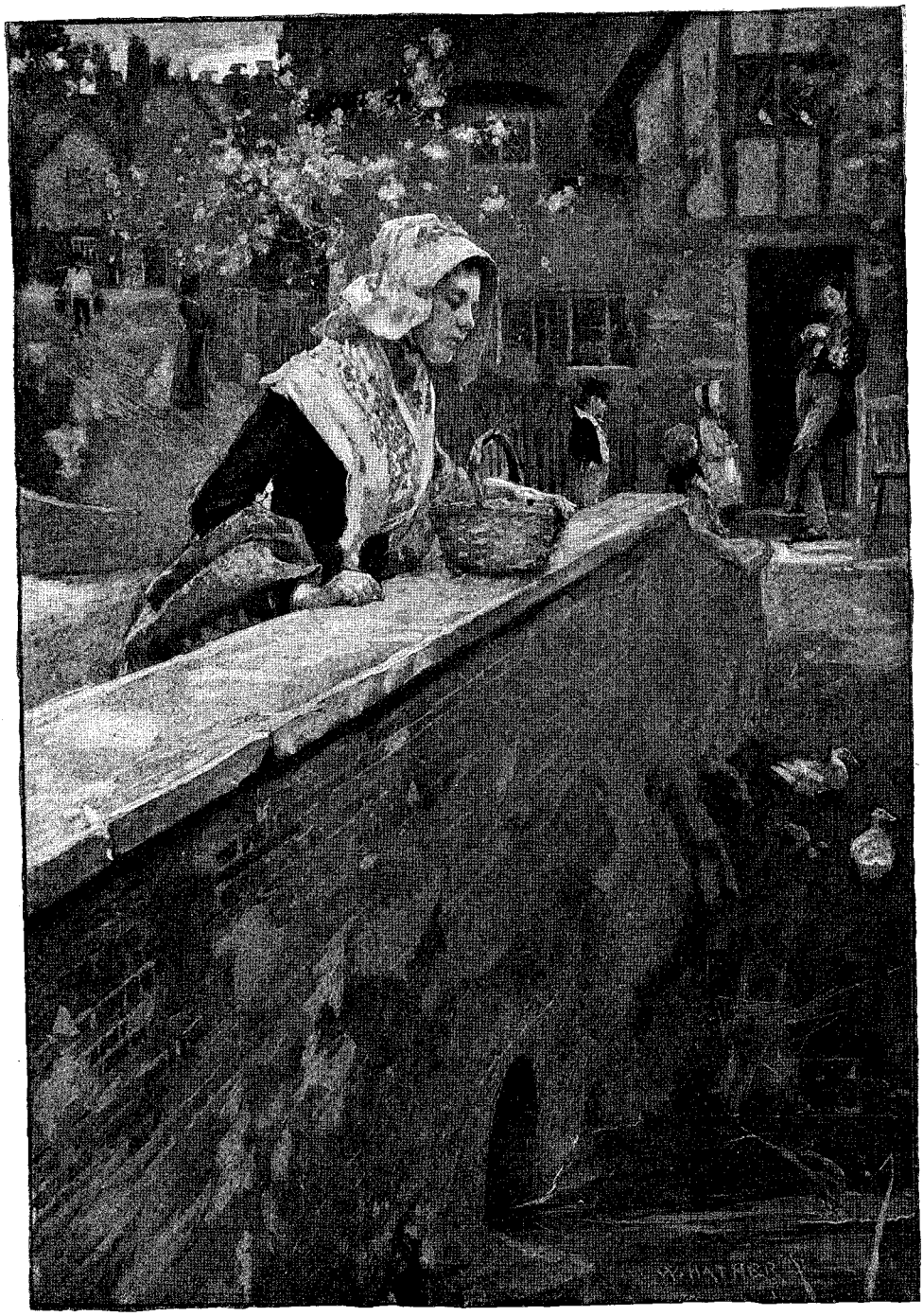
She informed her old lover, in an uncertain penmanship which suggested a trembling hand, of the trouble she had been put to in ascertaining his address, and then broached the subject which had prompted her to write. Four years ago, she said, with the greatest delicacy of which she was capable, she had been so foolish as to refuse him. Her wilful wrong-headedness had since been a grief to her many times, and of late particularly. As for Mr. Ollamoor, he had been absent almost as long as Ned—she did not know where. She would gladly marry Ned now if he were to ask her again, and be a tender wife to him till her life's end.

A tide of warm feeling must have surged through Ned Hipcroft's frame on receipt of this news, if we may judge by the issue. Unquestionably he loved her still, even if not to the exclusion of every other happiness. This from his Car'line, she who had been dead to him these many years, alive to him again as of old, was in itself a pleasant, gratifying thing. Ned had grown so resigned to, or satisfied with, his lonely lot, that he probably would not have shown much jubilation at anything. Still, a certain ardor of preoccupation, after his first surprise, revealed how deeply her confession of faith in him had stirred him. Measured and methodical in his ways, he did not answer the letter that day, nor the next, nor the next. He was having "a good think." When he did answer it, there was a great deal of sound reasoning mixed in with the unmistakable tenderness of his reply; but the tenderness itself was sufficient to reveal that he was pleased with her straightforward frankness; that the anchorage she had once obtained in his heart was renewable, if it had not been continuously firm.

He told her—and as he wrote his lips twitched humorously now and then over the few gentle words of raillery he indited among the rest of his sentences—that it was all very well for her to come round at this time of day. Why wouldn't she have him when he wanted her? She had no doubt learned that he was not married, but suppose his affections had since been fixed on another? She ought to beg his pardon. Still, he was not the man to forget her. But considering how he had been used, and what he had suffered, she could not quite expect him to go down to Stickleford and fetch her. But if she would come to him, and say she was sorry, as was only fair; why, yes, he would marry her, knowing what a good little woman she was to the core. He added that the request for her to come to him was a less one to make than it would have been when he first left Stickleford, or even a few months ago; for the new railway into South Wessex was now open, and there had just begun to be run wonderfully contrived special trains, called excursion trains, on account of the great Exhibition; so that she could come up easily alone.

She said in her reply how good it was of him to treat her so generously, after her hot and cold treatment of him;

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



DRAWN BY W. HATHERELL.

"She chanced to pause on the bridge near his house to rest herself."—Page 598.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that though she felt frightened at the magnitude of the journey, and was never as yet in a railway-train, having only seen one pass at a distance, she embraced his offer with all her heart; and would, indeed, own to him how sorry she was, and beg his pardon, and try to be a good wife always, and make up for lost time.

The remaining details of when and where were soon settled, Car'line informing him, for her ready identification in the crowd, that she would be wearing "my new sprigged-laylock cotton gown," and Ned gayly responding that, having married her the morning after her arrival, he would make a day of it by taking her to the Exhibition. One early summer afternoon, accordingly, he came from his place of work, and hastened toward Waterloo Station to meet her. It was as wet and chilly as an English June day can occasionally be, but as he waited on the platform in the drizzle he glowed inwardly, and seemed to have something to live for again.

The "excursion-train"—an absolutely new departure in the history of travel—was still a novelty on the Wessex line, and probably everywhere. Crowds of people had flocked to all the stations on the way up to witness the unwonted sight of so long a train's passage, even where they did not take advantage of the opportunity it offered. The seats for the humbler class of travellers in these early experiments in steam-locomotion were open trucks, without any protection whatever from the wind and rain; and damp weather having set in with the afternoon, the unfortunate occupants of these vehicles were, on the train drawing up at the London terminus, found to be in a pitiable condition from their long journey; blue-faced, stiff-necked, sneezing, rain-beaten, chilled to the marrow, many of the men being hatless; in fact, they resembled people who had been out all night in an open boat on a rough sea, rather than inland excursionists for pleasure. The women had in some degree protected themselves by turning up the skirts of their gowns over their heads, but as by this arrangement they were additionally exposed about the hips, they were all more or less in a sorry plight.

In the bustle and crush of alighting forms of both sexes which followed the entry of the huge concatenation into the station, Ned Hipcroft soon discerned the slim little figure his eye was in search of, in the sprigged lilac, as described. She came up to him with a frightened smile—still pretty, though so damp, weather-beaten, and shivering from the long exposure to the wind.

"Oh, Ned!" she sputtered, "I—I—" He clasped her in his arms and kissed her, whereupon she burst into a flood of tears.

"You are wet, my poor dear! I hope you'll not get cold," he said. And surveying her and her multifarious surrounding packages, he noticed that by the hand she led a toddling child—a little girl of three or so—whose hood was as clammy and features as blue as those of the other travellers.

"Who is this—somebody you know?" asked Ned, curiously.

"Yes, Ned. She's mine."

"Yours?"

"Yes—my own!"

"Well—upon my——"

"Ned, I didn't mention it in my letter, because, you see, it would have been so hard to explain! I thought that when we met I could tell you how she happened to be born, so much better than in writing! I hope you'll excuse it, dear Ned, now I have come so many miles!"

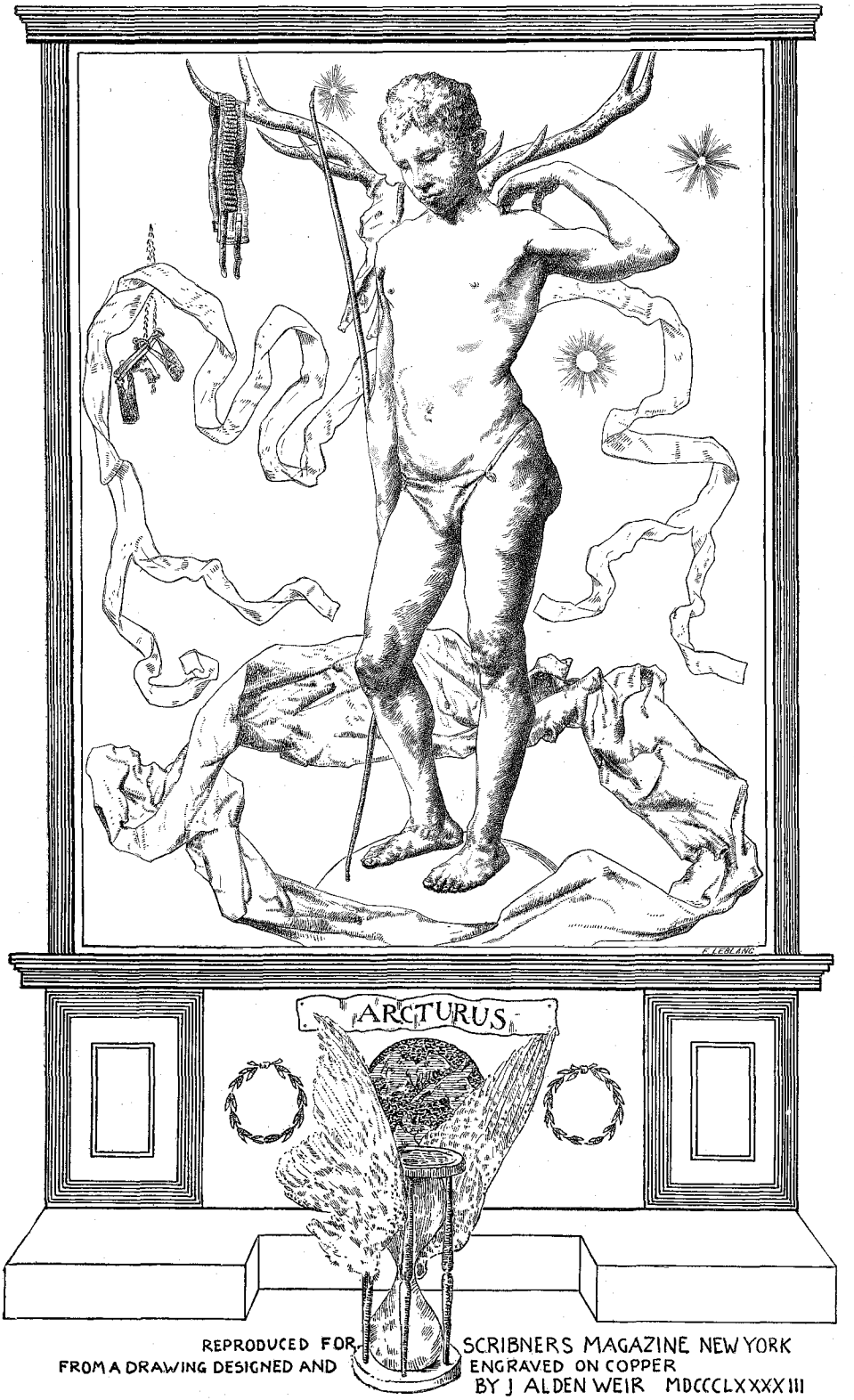
"This means Mr. Mop Ollamoor, I reckon!" said Hipcroft, gazing steadily at them from the distance of the yard or two to which he had withdrawn.

Car'line sighed. "But he's been gone away for years!" she supplicated. "And I never had a young man before! And I was so onlucky to be catched, though some of the girls down there go on like anything!"

Ned remained in silence, pondering. "You'll forgive me, dear Ned?" she added. "I haven't taken 'ee in after all, because—because you can pack us back again, if you want to; though 'tis hundreds o' miles, and so wet, and night a-coming on, and I with no money!"

A more pitiable picture than the pair of helpless creatures presented was never seen on a rainy day, as they stood on the great, gaunt, puddled platform, a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



REPRODUCED FOR SCRIBNERS MAGAZINE NEW YORK
FROM A DRAWING DESIGNED AND ENGRAVED ON COPPER
BY J ALDEN WEIR MDCCCLXXXIII

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

whiff of drizzle blowing under the roof upon them now and then; the pretty attire in which they had started from Stickleford in the early morning bemuddled and sodden, weariness on their faces, and fear of him in their eyes; for the child began to look as if she thought she too had done some wrong, remaining in an appalled silence till the tears rolled down her chubby cheeks.

"What's the matter, my little maid?" said Ned, mechanically.

"I do want to go home!" she let out, in tones that told of a bursting heart. "And my totties be cold, an' I shan't have no bread an' butter no more!"

"I don't know what to say to it all!" declared Ned, his own eye moist as he turned and walked a few steps with his head down; then regarded them again point blank. From the child escaped troubled breaths and concealed tears.

"Want some bread and butter, do 'ee?" he said, with preoccupied hardness of utterance.

"Ye—e—s!"

"Well, I dare say I can get 'ee a bit. Naturally, you must want some. And you, too, for that matter, Car'line."

"I do feel a little hungered. But I can keep it off," she murmured.

"Folk shouldn't do that. . . . There, come along." He caught up the child, as he added, "You must bide here to-night, anyhow. What can you do otherwise? I'll get 'ee some tea and victuals; and as for this job, I'm sure I don't know what to say! This is the way out."

They pursued their way, without speaking, to Ned's lodgings, which were not far off. There he dried them and made them comfortable, and prepared tea; they thankfully sat down. The ready-made household, of which he suddenly found himself the head, imparted a cosey aspect to his room, and a paternal one to himself. Presently he turned to the child and kissed her now blooming cheeks; and, looking wistfully at Car'line, kissed her also.

"I don't see how I can send 'ee back all them miles," he growled, "now you've come all the way o' purpose to join me. But you must trust me, Car'line, and show you've real faith in me. Well, do you feel better now, my little woman?"

The child nodded, her mouth being otherwise occupied.

"I did trust you, Ned, in coming; and I shall always."

Thus, without any definite agreement to forgive her, he tacitly acquiesced in the fate that Heaven had sent him; and on the day of their marriage (which was not quite so soon as he had expected it could be, on account of the time necessary for banns) he took her to the Exhibition when they came back from church, as he had promised. While standing near a large mirror in one of the courts devoted to furniture, Car'line started, for in the glass appeared the reflection of a form exactly resembling Mop Ollamoor's—so exactly, that it seemed impossible to believe anybody but that artist in person to be the original. On passing round the objects which hemmed in Ned, her, and the child from a direct view, no Mop was to be seen. Whether he were really in London or not at that time was never known; and Car'line always stoutly denied that her readiness to go and meet Ned in town arose from any rumor that Mop had also gone thither; which denial there was no reasonable ground for doubting.

And then the year glided away, and the Exhibition folded itself up and became a thing of the past. The park trees that had been enclosed for six months were again exposed to the winds and storms, and the sod grew green anew. Ned found that Car'line resolved herself into a very good wife and companion, though she had made herself what is called cheap to him; but in that she was like another domestic article, a cheap tea-pot, which often brews better tea than a dear one. One autumn Hipcroft found himself with but little work to do, and a prospect of less for the winter. Both being country born and bred, they fancied they would like to live again in their natural atmosphere. It was accordingly decided between them that they should leave the pent-up London lodging, and that Ned should seek out employment near his native place, his wife and her daughter staying with Car'line's father during the search for occupation and an abode of their own.

Tinglings of pleasure pervaded Car'line's spasmodic little frame as she jour-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

neyed down with Ned to the place she had left two or three years before, in silence and under a cloud. To return to where she had once been despised, a smiling London wife with a distinct London accent, was a triumph which the world did not witness every day.

The train did not stop at the petty roadside station that lay nearest to Stickleford, and the trio went on to Casterbridge. Ned thought it a good opportunity to make a few preliminary inquiries for employment at workshops in the borough where he had been known; and feeling cold from her journey, and it being dry underfoot and only dusk as yet, with a moon on the point of rising, Car'line and her little girl walked on toward Stickleford, leaving Ned to follow at a quicker pace, and pick her up at a certain half-way house, widely known as an inn.

The woman and child pursued the well-remembered way comfortably enough, though they were both becoming wearied. In the course of three miles they had passed Heedless William's Pond, the familiar landmark by Bloom's End, and were drawing near the Quiet Woman Inn, a lone roadside hostel on the lower verge of the Egdon Heath, since and for many years abolished. In stepping up toward it Car'line heard more voices within than had formerly been customary at such an hour, and she learned that an auction of fat stock had been held near the spot that afternoon. The child would be the better for a rest as well as herself, she thought, and she entered.

The guests and customers overflowed into the passage, and Car'line had no sooner crossed the threshold than a man, whom she remembered by sight, came forward with a glass and mug in his hands toward a friend leaning against the wall; but, seeing her, very gallantly offered her a drink of the liquor, which was gin-and-beer hot, pouring her out a tumblerful and saying, in a moment or two: "Surely, 'tis little Car'line Aspent that was—down at Stickleford?"

She assented, and, though she did not exactly want this beverage, she drank it since it was offered, and her entertainer begged her to come in further and sit down. Once within the room she found that all the persons present were seated close against the walls, and there being a chair vacant she did the same. An explanation of their position occurred the next moment. In the opposite corner stood Mop, rosining his bow and looking just the same as ever. The company had cleared the middle of the room for dancing, and they were about to dance again. As she wore a veil to keep off the wind, she did not think he had recognized her, or could possibly guess the identity of the child; and to her satisfied surprise she found that she could confront him quite calmly—mistress of herself in the dignity her London life had given her. Before she had quite emptied her glass the dance was called, the dancers formed in two lines, the music sounded, and the figure began.

Then matters changed for Car'line. A tremor quickened itself to life in her, and her hand so shook that she could hardly set down her glass. It was not the dance nor the dancers, but the notes of that old violin which thrilled the London wife, these having still all the witchery that she had so well known of yore, and under which she had used to lose all power of independent will. How it all came back! There was the fiddling figure against the wall; the large oily, mop-like head of him, and beneath the mop the face with closed eyes.

After the first moments of paralyzed reverie, the familiar tune in the familiar rendering made her laugh and shed tears simultaneously. Then a man at the bottom of the dance, whose partner had dropped away, stretched out his hand and beckoned to her to take the place. She did not want to dance; she entreated by signs to be left where she was, but she was entreating of the tune and its player rather than of the dancing man. The saltatory tendency which the fiddler and his cunning instrumentation had ever been able to start in her was seizing Car'line just as it had done in earlier years, possibly assisted by the gin-and-beer hot. Tired as she was, she grasped her little girl by the hand, and plunging in at the bottom of the figure, whirled about with the rest. She found that her companions were mostly people of the neighboring hamlets and farms—Bloom's-End, Mellstock, Lewgate, and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

elsewhere ; and by degrees she was recognized as she convulsively danced on, wishing that Mop would cease and let her heart rest from the aching he caused, and her feet also.

After long and many minutes the dance ended, when she was urged to fortify herself with more gin-and-beer ; which she did, feeling very weak and overpowered with hysteric emotion. She refrained from unveiling, to keep Mop in ignorance of her presence, if possible. Several of the guests having left, Car'line hastily wiped her lips and also turned to go ; but, according to the account of some who remained, at that very moment a five-handed reel was proposed, in which two or three begged her to join. She declined on the plea of being tired and having to walk to Stickleford, when Mop began aggressively tweedling "My Fancy-Lad," in D major, as the air to which the reel was to be footed. He must have recognized her, though she did not know it, for it was the strain of all seductive strains which she was least able to resist—the one he had played when she was leaning over the bridge at the date of their first acquaintance. Car'line stepped despairingly into the middle of the room with the other four.

Reels were resorted to hereabouts at this time by the more robust spirits, for the reduction of superfluous energy which the ordinary figure-dances were not powerful enough to exhaust. As everybody knows, or does not know, the five reelers stood in the form of a cross, the reel being performed by each line of three alternately, the persons who successively came to the middle place dancing in both directions. Car'line soon found herself in this place, the axis of the whole performance, and could not get out of it, the tune turning into the first part without giving her opportunity. And now she began to suspect that Mop did know her, and was doing this on purpose, though whenever she stole a glance at him his closed eyes betokened obliviousness to everything outside his own brain. She continued to wend her way through the figure of 8 that was formed by her course, the fiddler introducing into his notes the wild and agonizing sweetness of a living voice in one too highly wrought ; its pathos running high and running low in endless variation, projecting through her nerves excruciating spasms, a sort of blissful torture. The room swam, the tune was endless ; and in about a quarter of an hour the only other woman in the figure dropped out exhausted, and sank panting on a bench.

The reel instantly resolved itself into a four-handed one. Car'line would have given anything to leave off ; but she had, or fancied she had, no power, while Mop played such tunes ; and thus another ten minutes slipped by, a haze of dust now clouding the candles, the floor being of stone, sanded. Then another dancer fell out—one of the men—and went into the passage, in a frantic search for liquor. To turn the figure into a three-handed reel was the work of a second, Mop modulating at the same time into "The Fairy Dance," as better suited to the contracted movement, and no less one of those foods of love which, as manufactured by his bow, had always intoxicated her.

In a reel for three there was no rest whatever, and four or five minutes were enough to make her remaining two partners, now thoroughly blown, stamp their last bar, and, like their predecessors, limp off into the next room to get something to drink. Car'line, half-stifled inside her veil, was left dancing alone, the apartment now being empty of everybody save herself, Mop, and their little girl.

She flung up the veil, and cast her questioning eyes upon him, as if imploring him to withdraw himself and his acoustic magnetism from the atmosphere. Mop opened one of his own orbs, as though for the first time, fixed it peeringly upon her, and smiling dreamily, threw into his strains the reserve of expression which he could not afford to waste on a big and noisy dance. Crowds of little chromatic subtleties, capable of drawing tears from a statue, proceeded straightway from the ancient fiddle, as if it were dying of the emotion which had been pent up within it ever since its banishment from some Italian spot where it first took shape and sound. There was that in the look of Mop's one dark eye which said :

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"You cannot leave off, dear, whether you would or no," and it bred in her a paroxysm of desperation that defied him to tire her down.

She thus continued to dance alone, defiantly as she thought, but in truth slavishly and abjectly, subject to every wave of the melody, and probed by the gimlet-like gaze of her fascinator's open eye; keeping up at the same time a feeble smile in his face, as a feint to signify it was still her own pleasure which led her on. A terrified embarrassment as to what she could say to him if she were to leave off, had its unrecognized share in keeping her going. The child, who was beginning to be distressed by the strained situation, came up and said: "Stop, mother, stop, and let's go home!" as she seized Car'line's hand.

Suddenly Car'line sank staggering to the floor; and rolling over on her face, prone she remained. Mop's fiddle thereupon emitted an elfin shriek of finality; stepping quickly down from the nine-gallon beer-cask which had formed his rostrum, he went to the little girl, who disconsolately bent over her mother.

The guests who had gone into the back-room for liquor and change of air, hearing something unusual, trooped back hitherward, where they endeavored to revive poor, weak Car'line by blowing her with the bellows and opening the window. Ned, her husband, who had been detained in Casterbridge, as aforesaid, came along the road at this juncture, and hearing excited voices through the open window, and to his great surprise, the mention of his wife's name, he entered amid the rest upon the scene. Car'line was now in convulsions, weeping violently, and for a long time nothing could be done with her. While he was sending for a cart to take her onward to Stickleford, Hipcroft anxiously inquired how it had all happened; and then the assembly explained that a fiddler formerly known in the locality had lately revisited his old haunts, and had taken upon himself without invitation to play that evening at the inn.

Ned demanded the fiddler's name, and they said Ollamoor.

"Ah!" exclaimed Ned, looking round him. "Where is he, and where—where's my little girl?"

Ollamoor had disappeared, and so had the child. Hipcroft was in ordinary a quiet and tractable fellow, but a determination which was to be feared settled in his face now. "Curse him!" he cried. "I'll beat his skull in for'n, if I swing for it to-morrow!"

He had rushed to the poker which lay on the hearth, and hastened down the passage, the people following. Outside the house, on the other side of the highway, a mass of dark heath-land rose sullenly upward to its not easily accessible interior, a ravined plateau, whereon jutted into the sky, at the distance of a couple of miles, the fir-woods of Mistover backed by the Yalbury coppices—a place of Dantesque gloom at this hour, which would have afforded secure hiding for a battery of artillery, much less a man and a child.

Some other men plunged thitherward with him, and more went along the road. They were gone about twenty minutes altogether, returning without result to the inn. Ned sat down in the settle, and clasped his forehead with his hands.

"Well—what a fool the man is, and hev been all these years, if he thinks the child his, as a' do seem to!" they whispered, "an' everybody else knowing otherwise!"

"No, I don't think 'tis mine!" cried Ned, hoarsely, as he looked up from his hands. "But she is mine, all the same! Ha'n't I nussed her? Ha'n't I fed her and teached her? Ha'n't I played wi' her? Oh, little Carry—gone with that rogue—gone!"

"You ha'n't lost your mis'ess, anyhow," they said to console him. "She is feeling better, and she's more to 'ee than a child that isn't yours."

"She isn't! She's not so particular much to me, especially now she's lost the little maid! But Carry's everything!"

"Well, ver' like you'll find her to-morrow."

"Ah—but shall I? Yet he *can't* hurt her — surely he can't! Well—how's Car'line now? I am ready. Is the cart here?"

She was lifted into the vehicle, and

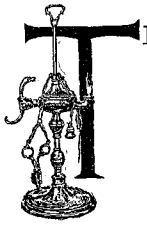
PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

they sadly lumbered on toward Stickleford. Next day she was better; but the fits were still upon her; and her will seemed shattered. For the child she appeared to show singularly little anxiety, though Ned was nearly distracted. It was nevertheless quite expected that the impish Mop would restore the lost one after a freak of a day or two; but time went on, and neither he nor she could be heard of, and Hipcroft murmured that perhaps he was exercising upon her some unholy musical charm, as he had done upon Car'line herself. Weeks passed, and still they could obtain no clue either to the fiddler's whereabouts or the girl's.

Then Ned, who had obtained only temporary employment in the neighborhood, took a sudden hatred toward his native district, and a rumor reaching his ears through the police that a somewhat similar man and child had been seen at a fair near London, he playing a violin, she dancing on stilts, a new interest in the capital took possession of Hipcroft with an intensity which would scarcely allow him time to pack before returning thither. He did not, however, find the lost one, though he made it the entire business of his over-hours to stand about in by-streets in the hope of discovering her, and would start up in the night, saying, "That rascal's torturing her to maintain him!" To which his wife would answer, plaintively, "Don't 'ee raft yourself so, Ned; he won't hurt her!" and fall asleep again. That Carry and her father had emigrated to America was the general opinion; Mop, no doubt, finding the girl a highly desirable companion when he had trained her to keep him by her earnings as a dancer. There, for that matter, they may be performing in some capacity now, though he must be an old scamp verging on threescore-and-ten, and she a woman of four-and-forty.

THE MIDDLE YEARS.

By Henry James.



THE April day was soft and bright, and poor Dencombe, happy in the conceit of reasserted strength, stood in the garden of the hotel, comparing, with a deliberation, in which, however, there was still something of languor, the attractions of easy strolls. He liked the feeling of the south, so far as you could have it in the north, he liked the sandy cliffs and the clustered pines, he liked even the colorless sea. "Bournemouth as a health-resort" had always sounded second-rate to him, but now he was reconciled to the moderate. The sociable country postman, passing through the garden, had just given him a small parcel, which he took out with him, leaving the hotel to the right and creeping to a convenient bench that he knew of, a safe recess in the cliff. It looked to the south, to the tinted walls of the island, and was protected behind by the sloping shoulder of the down. He was sufficiently tired when he reached it, and for a moment he was disappointed; he was better, of course, but better, after all, than what? He should never again, as at one or two great moments of the past, be better than himself. The infinite of life had gone, and what was left of the dose was a small glass engraved like a thermometer by the apothecary. He sat and stared at the sea, which appeared all surface and twinkle, far shallower than the spirit of man. It was the abyss of human illusion that was the real, the tideless deep. He held his packet, which had come by book-post, unopened on his knee, liking, in the lapse of so many joys (his illness had made him feel his age), to know that it was there, but taking for granted there could be no complete renewal of the pleasure, dear to young experience, of seeing one's self "just

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

out." Dencombe, who had a reputation, had come out too often and knew too well in advance how he should look.

His postponement associated itself vaguely, after a little, with a group of three persons, two ladies and a young man, whom, beneath him, straggling and seemingly silent, he could see move slowly together along the sands. The gentleman had his head bent over a book and was occasionally brought to a stop by the charm of this volume, which, as Dencombe could perceive even at a distance, had a cover intensely red. Then his companions, going a little farther, waited for him to come up, poking their parasols into the beach, looking around them at the sea and sky, and clearly sensible of the beauty of the day. To these things the young man with the book was still more clearly indifferent; lingering, credulous, absorbed, he was an object of envy to an observer from whose connection with literature all such artlessness had faded. One of the ladies was large and mature; the other had the spareness of comparative youth and of a social situation possibly inferior. The large lady carried back Dencombe's imagination to the age of crinoline; she wore a hat of the shape of a mushroom, decorated with a blue veil, and had the air, in her aggressive amplitude, of clinging to a vanished fashion or even a lost cause. Presently her companion produced from under the folds of a mantle a limp, portable chair which she stiffened out and of which the large lady took possession. This act, and something in the movement of either party, instantly characterized the performers—they performed for Dencombe's recreation—as opulent matron and humble dependant. What, moreover, was the use of being an approved novelist if one couldn't establish a relation between such figures; as, for instance, that the young man was the son of the opulent matron, and that the humble dependant, the daughter of a clergyman or an officer, nourished a secret passion for him? Was that not visible from the way she stole behind her protectress to look back at him?—back to where he had let himself come to a full stop when his mother sat down to rest. His book was a novel; it had the catchpenny cover, and while the romance of life stood neglected at his side he lost himself in that of the circulating library. He moved mechanically to where the sand was softer, and ended by plumping down in it to finish his chapter at his ease. The humble dependant, discouraged by his remoteness, wandered, with a sensitive droop of the head, in another direction, and the exorbitant lady, watching the waves, offered a confused resemblance to a flying-machine that had broken down.

When his drama began to drop Dencombe remembered that he had, after all, another pastime. Though such promptitude on the part of the publisher was rare, he was already able to draw from its wrapper his "latest," perhaps his last. The cover of "The Middle Years" was properly meretricious, the smell of the fresh pages was sweet; but for the moment he went no farther—he had become conscious of a strange alienation. He had forgotten what his book was about. Had the assault of his old ailment, which he had so fallaciously come to Bournemouth to ward off, interposed utter blankness as to what had preceded it? He had finished the revision of proof before quitting London, but his subsequent fortnight in bed had passed the sponge over color. He couldn't have chanted to himself a single sentence, couldn't have turned with curiosity or confidence to any particular page. His subject had already gone from him, leaving scarcely a superstition behind. He uttered a low moan as he took the measure of this anomaly, so definitely it seemed to represent the progressive decay of his faculties. The tears filled his mild eyes; something precious had passed away. This was the pang that had been sharpest during the last few years—the sense of ebbing time, of shrinking opportunity; and now he felt not so much that his last chance was going as that it was gone indeed. He had done all that he should ever do, and yet he had not done what he wanted. This was the laceration—that practically his career was over: it was as violent as a rough hand at his throat. He rose from his seat nervously, like a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

creature haunted by a dread, then he fell back in his weakness and nervously opened his book. It was a single volume; he preferred single volumes and aimed at a rare compression. He began to read, and little by little, in this occupation, he was pacified and reassured. Everything came back to him, but came back with a strangeness, came back, above all, with a high and magnificent beauty. He read his own prose, he turned his own leaves, and had, as he sat there with the spring sunshine on the page, an emotion peculiar and intense. His career was over, no doubt, but it was over, after all, with *that*.

He had forgotten during his illness the work of the previous year; but what he had chiefly forgotten was that it was extraordinarily good. He lived once more into his story and was drawn down, as by a siren's hand, to where, in the dim underworld of fiction, great silent subjects loom. He recognized his motive and surrendered to his talent. Never, probably, had that talent, such as it was, been so great. His difficulties were still there, but what was also there, to his perception, though probably, alas! to nobody else's, was the art that in most cases had surmounted them. In his surprised enjoyment of this ability he had a glimpse of a possible reprieve. Surely its force was not spent—there was life and service in it yet. It had not come to him easily, it had been backward and roundabout. It was the child of time, the nursling of delay; he had struggled and suffered for it, making sacrifices not to be counted, and now that it was really mature was it to cease to yield, to confess itself brutally beaten? There was an infinite charm for Dencombe in feeling as he had never felt before that diligence *vincit omnia*. The result produced in his little book was somehow a result beyond his conscious intention; it was as if he had planted his genius, had trusted his method, and they had grown up and flowered with this sweetness. If the achievement had been real, however, the process had been manful enough. What he saw so intensely to-day, what he felt as a nail driven in, was that only now, at the very last, had he come into possession. His development had been abnormally slow, almost grotesquely gradual. He had been hindered and retarded by experience, and for long periods had only groped his way. It had taken too much of his life to produce too little of his art. The art had come, but it had come after everything else. At such a rate a first existence was too short—long enough only to collect material; so that to fructify, to use the material, one must have a second age, an extension. This extension was what poor Dencombe sighed for. As he turned the last leaves of his volume he murmured, "Ah for another go!—ah for a better chance!"

The three persons he had observed on the sands had vanished and then reappeared; they had now wandered up a path, an artificial and easy ascent, which led to the top of the cliff. Dencombe's bench was half-way down, on a sheltered ledge, and the large lady, a massive, heterogeneous person, with a bold black eye and a kind red face, now took a few moments to rest. She wore dirty gauntlets and immense diamond ear-rings; at first she looked vulgar, but she contradicted this announcement in an agreeable off-hand voice. While her companions stood waiting for her she plumped herself on the end of Dencombe's seat. The young man had gold spectacles, through which, with his finger still in his red-covered book, he glanced at the volume, bound in the same shade of the same color, lying on the lap of the original occupant of the bench. After an instant Dencombe understood that he was struck with a resemblance, had recognized the gilt stamp on the crimson cloth, was reading "The Middle Years," and now perceived that somebody else had kept pace with him. The stranger was startled, possibly even a little ruffled, to find that he was not the only person who had been favored with an early copy. The eyes of the two proprietors met for a moment, and Dencombe derived amusement from the expression of those of his competitor, those, it might even be inferred, of his admirer. They confessed to some resentment—they seemed to say: "Hang it, has he got it *already?*—Of course he's a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

brute of a reviewer!" Dencombe shuffled his copy out of sight while the opulent matron, rising from her repose, broke out: "I feel already the good of this air!"

"I can't say I do," said the scantier lady. "I find myself quite let down."

"I find myself horribly hungry. At what time did you order lunch?" her protectress pursued.

The young person put the question by. "Doctor Hugh always orders it."

"I ordered nothing to-day—I'm going to make you diet," said their comrade.

"Then I shall go home and sleep. *Qui dort dine!*"

"Can I trust you to Miss Vernham?" asked Doctor Hugh of his elder companion.

"Don't I trust *you?*" she archly inquired.

"Not too much!" Miss Vernham, with her eyes on the ground, permitted herself to declare. "You must come with us at least to the house," she went on, while the personage on whom they appeared to be in attendance began to mount higher. She had got a little out of ear-shot; nevertheless Miss Vernham became, so far as Dencombe was concerned, less distinctly audible to murmur to the young man: "I don't think you realize all you *owe* the Countess!"

Absently, a moment, Doctor Hugh caused his gold-rimmed spectacles to shine at her.

"Is that the way I strike you? I see—I see!"

"She's awfully good to us," continued Miss Vernham, compelled by her interlocutor's immovability to stand there in spite of this discussion of private matters. Of what use would it have been that Dencombe should be sensitive to shades had he not detected in that immovability a strange influence from the quiet old convalescent in the great tweed cape? Miss Vernham appeared suddenly to become aware of some such connection, for she added, in a moment: "If you want to sun yourself here you can come back after you've seen us home."

Doctor Hugh, at this, hesitated, and Dencombe, in spite of a desire to pass for unconscious, risked a covert glance at him. What his eyes met this time, as it happened, was on the part of the young lady a queer stare, naturally vitreous, which made her aspect remind him of some figure (he couldn't name it), in a play or a novel, some sinister governess or tragic old maid. She seemed to scrutinize him, to challenge him, to say with a glazed impertinence: "What have *you* got to do with us?" At the same instant the rich humor of the Countess reached them from above: "Come, come, my little lambs, you should follow your old *bergère!*" Miss Vernham turned away at this, pursuing the ascent, and Doctor Hugh, after another mute appeal to Dencombe and a moment's evident demur, deposited his book on the bench, as if to keep his place or even as a sign that he would return, and bounded without difficulty up the rougher part of the cliff.

Equally innocent and infinite are the pleasures of observation and the resources engendered by the habit of analyzing life. It amused poor Dencombe, as he dawdled in his tepid air-bath, to think that he was waiting for a revelation of something at the back of a fine young mind. He looked hard at the book on the end of the bench, but he wouldn't have touched it for the world. It served his purpose to have a theory which should not be exposed to refutation. He already felt better of his melancholy; he had, according to his old formula, put his head at the window. A passing "Countess" could draw off the fancy when, like the elder of the ladies who had just retreated, she was as obvious as the giantess of a caravan. It was indeed general views that were terrible; short ones, contrary to an opinion sometimes expressed, were the refuge, were the remedy. Doctor Hugh couldn't possibly be anything but a reviewer who had understandings for early copies with publishers or with newspapers. He reappeared in a quarter of an hour, with visible relief at finding Dencombe on the spot, and the gleam of white teeth in an embarrassed but generous smile. He was perceptibly disappointed at the eclipse of the other copy of the book; it was a pretext the less for speaking to the stranger. But he spoke, not-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

withstanding; he held up his own copy and broke out pleadingly:

"*Do* say, if you have occasion to speak of it, that it's the best thing he has done yet!"

Dencombe responded with a laugh: "Done yet" was so amusing to him, made such a grand avenue of the future. Better still, the young man took *him* for a reviewer! He pulled out "The Middle Years" from under his cape, but instinctively concealed any tell-tale look of paternity. This was partly because a man was always a fool for calling attention to his work. "Is that what *you're* going to say?" he inquired of his visitor.

"I'm not quite sure I shall write anything. I don't, as a regular thing—I enjoy in peace. But it's awfully fine."

Dencombe debated a moment. If his interlocutor had begun to abuse him he would have instantly confessed to his identity, but there was no harm in drawing him on a little to praise. He drew him on with such success that in a few moments his new acquaintance was seated by his side, confessing candidly that Dencombe's novels were the only ones he could read a second time. He had come the day before from London, where a friend of his, a journalist, had lent him his copy of the last—the copy sent to the office of the journal and already the subject of a "notice" which, as was pretended there (but one had to allow for "swagger") it had taken a full quarter of an hour to prepare. He intimated that he was ashamed for his friend, and in the case of a work demanding and repaying study, of such summary practices; and, with his fresh appreciation and inexplicable wish to express it, he speedily became for poor Dencombe a remarkable, a delightful apparition. Chance had brought the weary man of letters face to face with the greatest admirer in the new generation whom it was supposable he possessed. The admirer, in truth, was mystifying, so rare a case was it to find a bristling young doctor—he looked like a German physiologist—enamoured of literary form. It was an accident, but happier than most accidents, so that Dencombe, exhilarated as well as confounded, spent half an hour in making his visitor talk while he kept himself quiet. He explained his premature possession of "The Middle Years" by an allusion to the friendship of the publisher, who, knowing he was at Bournemouth for his health, had paid him this graceful attention. He admitted that he had been ill, for Doctor Hugh would infallibly have guessed it; he even went so far as to wonder whether he mightn't look for some hygienic "tip" from a personage combining so bright an enthusiasm with the latest medical lore. It would shake his faith a little perhaps to have to take a doctor seriously who could take *him* so seriously, but he enjoyed this gushing modern youth and he felt, with an acute pang, that there would still be work to do in a world in which such odd combinations were presented. It was not true, what he had tried for renunciation's sake to believe, that all the combinations were exhausted. They were not, they were not—they were infinite; the exhaustion was in the miserable artist.

Doctor Hugh was an ardent physiologist, saturated with the spirit of the age—in other words he had just taken his degree; but he was independent and various, he talked like a man who would have liked to love literature best. He would fain have made fine phrases, but nature had denied him the gift. Some of the finest in "The Middle Years" had struck him inordinately, and he took the liberty of reading them to Dencombe in support of his plea. He grew vivid, in the balmy air, to his companion, for whose deep refreshment he seemed to have been sent; and was particularly ingenuous in describing how recently he had become acquainted, and how instantly infatuated, with the only man who had put flesh between the ribs of an art that was starving on superstitions. He had not yet written to him—he was deterred by a sentiment of respect. Dencombe at this moment felicitated himself more than ever on having consistently dodged the photographers. His visitor's attitude promised him a luxury of intercourse, but he surmised that a certain security in

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it, for Doctor Hugh, would depend not a little on the Countess. He learned without delay with what variety of Countess they were concerned, as well as the nature of the tie that united the curious trio. The large lady, an Englishwoman by birth and the daughter of a celebrated barytone, whose taste, without his talent, she had inherited, was the widow of a French nobleman and mistress of all that remained of the handsome fortune, the fruit of her father's earnings, that had constituted her dower. Miss Vernham, an odd creature but an accomplished pianist, was attached to her person at a salary. The Countess was generous, independent, eccentric; she travelled with her minstrel and her medical man. Ignorant and passionate, she had nevertheless moments in which she was almost irresistible. Dencombe saw her sit for her portrait in Doctor Hugh's free sketch, and felt the picture of his young friend's relation to her frame itself in his mind. This young friend, for a representative of the new psychology, was himself easily hypnotized, and if he became abnormally communicative it was only a sign of his real subjection. Dencombe did accordingly what he wanted with him, even without being known as Dencombe.

Taken ill on a journey in Switzerland, the Countess had picked him up at an hotel, and the accident of his happening to please her had made her offer him, with her imperious liberality, terms that couldn't fail to dazzle a practitioner without patients and whose resources had been drained dry by his studies. It was not the way he would have elected to spend his time, but it was time that would pass quickly, and meanwhile she was wonderfully kind. She exacted perpetual attention, but it was impossible not to like her. He gave details about his queer patient, a "type" if there ever was one, who had in connection with her flushed obesity and in addition to the morbid strain of a violent and aimless will, a grave organic disorder; but he came back to his loved novelist, whom he was so good as to pronounce more essentially a poet than many of those who went in for verse, with a zeal excited, as all his indiscretion had been excited, by the happy chance of Dencombe's sympathy and the coincidence of their occupation. Dencombe had confessed to a slight personal acquaintance with the author of "The Middle Years," but had not felt himself as ready as he could have wished when his companion, who had never yet encountered a being so privileged, began to be eager for particulars. He even thought that Doctor Hugh's eye at that moment emitted a glimmer of suspicion. But the young man was too inflamed to be shrewd, and repeatedly caught up the book to exclaim: "Did you notice this?" or "Weren't you immensely struck with that?" "There's a beautiful passage toward the end," he broke out; and again he laid his hand upon the volume. As he turned the pages he came upon something else, while Dencombe saw him suddenly change color. He had taken up, as it lay on the bench, Dencombe's copy instead of his own, and his neighbor immediately guessed the reason of his start. Doctor Hugh looked grave an instant; then he said: "I see you've been altering the text!" Dencombe was a passionate corrector, a fingerer of style; the last thing he ever arrived at was a form final for himself. His ideal would have been to publish secretly, and then, on the published text, treat himself to the terrified revise, sacrificing always a first edition and beginning for the world with the second. This morning, in "The Middle Years," his pencil had pricked a dozen lights. He was amused at the effect of the young man's reproach; for an instant it made him change color. He stammered, at any rate, ambiguously; then, through a blur of ebbing consciousness, saw Doctor Hugh's mystified eyes. He only had time to feel he was about to be ill again—that emotion, excitement, fatigue, the heat of the sun, the solicitation of the air, had combined to play him a trick, before, stretching out a hand to his visitor with a plaintive cry, he lost his senses altogether.

Later he knew that he had fainted and that Doctor Hugh had got him home in a bath-chair, the conductor of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which, prowling within hail for custom, had happened to remember seeing him in the garden of the hotel. He had recovered his perception in the transit, and had, in bed, that afternoon, a vague recollection of Doctor Hugh's young face, as they went together, bent over him in a comforting laugh and expressive of something more than a suspicion of his identity. That identity was ineffaceable now, and all the more that he was disappointed, disgusted. He had been rash, been stupid, had gone out too soon, stayed out too long. He oughtn't to have exposed himself to strangers, he ought to have taken his servant. He felt as if he had fallen into a hole too deep to descry any little patch of heaven. He was confused about the time that had elapsed—he pieced the fragments together. He had seen his doctor, the real one, the one who had treated him from the first and who had again been very kind. His servant was in and out on tiptoe, looking very wise after the fact. He said more than once something about the sharp young gentleman. The rest was vagueness, in so far as it wasn't despair. The vagueness, however, justified itself by dreams, dozing anxieties from which he finally emerged to the consciousness of a dark room and a shaded candle.

"You'll be all right again—I know all about you now," said a voice near him that he knew to be young. Then his meeting with Doctor Hugh came back. He was too discouraged to joke about it yet, but he was able to perceive, after a little, that the interest of it was intense for his visitor. "Of course I can't attend you professionally—you've got your own man, with whom I've talked and who's excellent," Doctor Hugh went on. "But you must let me come to see you as a good friend. I've just looked in before going to bed. You're doing beautifully, but it's a good job I was with you on the cliff. I shall come in early to-morrow. I want to do something for you. I want to do *everything*. You've done a tremendous lot for *me*." The young man held his hand, bending over him, and poor Dencombe, weakly aware of this living pressure, simply lay there and accepted his devotion. He couldn't do anything less—he needed help too much.

The idea of the help he needed was very present to him that night, which he spent in a lucid stillness, an intensity of thought that constituted a reaction from his hours of stupor. He was lost, he was lost—he was lost if he couldn't be saved. He was not afraid of suffering, of death; he was not even in love with life; but he had had a deep demonstration of desire. It came over him in the long, quiet hours that only with "The Middle Years" had he taken his flight; only on that day, visited by soundless processions, had he recognized his kingdom. He had had a revelation of his range. What he dreaded was the idea that his reputation should stand on the unfinished. It was not with his past but with his future that it should properly be concerned. Illness and age rose before him like spectres with pitiless eyes: how was he to bribe such fates to give him the second chance? He had had the one chance that all men have—he had had the chance of life. He went to sleep again very late, and when he awoke Doctor Hugh was sitting by his head. There was already, by this time, something beautifully familiar in him.

"Don't think I've turned out your physician," he said; "I'm acting with his consent. He has been here and seen you. Somehow he seems to trust me. I told him how we happened to come together yesterday, and he recognizes that I've a peculiar right."

Dencombe looked at him with a calculating earnestness. "How have you squared the Countess?"

The young man blushed a little, but he laughed. "Oh, never mind the Countess!"

"You told me she was very exacting."

Doctor Hugh was silent a moment. "So she is."

"And Miss Vernham's an *intrigante*."

"How do you know that?"

"I know everything. One *has* to, to write decently!"

"I think she's mad," said limpid Doctor Hugh.

"Well, don't quarrel with the Countess—she's a present help to you."

"I *don't* quarrel," Doctor Hugh re-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

plied. "But I don't get on with silly women." Then he added to Dencombe: "You seem very much alone."

"That often happens at my age. I've outlived, I've lost by the way."

Doctor Hugh hesitated; then surmounting a soft scruple: "Whom have you lost?"

"Every one."

"Ah, no," the young man murmured, laying a hand on his arm.

"I once had a wife—I once had a son. My wife died when my child was born, and my boy, at school, was carried off by typhoid."

"I wish *I'd* been there!" said Doctor Hugh, simply.

"Well—if you're *here!*" Dencombe answered, with a smile that, in spite of dimness, showed how much he liked to be sure of his companion's whereabouts.

"You talk strangely of your age. You're not old."

"Hypocrite—so early!"

"I speak physiologically."

"That's the way I've been speaking for the last five years, and it's exactly what I've been saying to myself. It isn't till we *are* old that we begin to tell ourselves we're not!"

"Yet I know *I'm* young," Doctor Hugh declared.

"Not so well as I!" laughed his patient, whose visitor indeed would have established the truth in question by the honesty with which he changed the point of view, remarking that it must be one of the charms of age—at any rate in the case of high distinction—to feel that one has labored and achieved. Doctor Hugh employed the common phrase about earning one's rest, and it made poor Dencombe, for an instant, almost angry. He recovered himself, however, to explain, lucidly enough, that if he, ungraciously, knew nothing of such a balm, it was doubtless because he had wasted inestimable years. He had followed literature from the first, but he had taken a lifetime to get alongside of her. Only to-day, at last, had he begun to *see*, so that what he had hitherto done was a movement without a direction. He had ripened too late, and was so clumsily constituted that he had had to teach himself by mistakes.

"I prefer your flowers, then, to other people's fruit, and your mistakes to other people's successes," said gallant Doctor Hugh. "It's for your mistakes I admire you."

"You're happy—you don't *know*," Dencombe answered.

Looking at his watch the young man had got up; he named the hour of the afternoon at which he would return. Dencombe warned him against committing himself too deeply, and expressed again all his dread of making him neglect the Countess—perhaps incur her displeasure.

"I want to be like *you*—I want to learn by mistakes!" Doctor Hugh laughed.

"Take care you don't make too grave a one! But do come back," Dencombe added, with the glimmer of a new idea.

"You should have had more vanity!" Doctor Hugh spoke as if he knew the exact amount required to make a man of letters normal.

"No, no—I only should have had more time. I want another go."

"Another go?"

"I want an extension."

"An extension?" Again Doctor Hugh repeated Dencombe's words, with which he seemed to have been struck.

"Don't you know?—I want to *live*."

The young man, for good-by, had taken his hand, which closed with a certain force. They looked at each other hard a moment. "You *will* live," said Doctor Hugh.

"Don't be superficial. It's too serious!"

"You *shall* live!" Dencombe's visitor declared, turning pale.

"Ah, that's better!" And as he retired the invalid, with a nervous laugh, sank gratefully back.

All that day and all the following night he wondered if it mightn't be managed. His doctor came again, his servant was attentive, but it was to his confident young friend that he found himself mentally appealing. His collapse on the cliff was plausibly explained, and his liberation, on a better basis, promised for the morrow; meanwhile, however, the intensity of his meditations kept him tranquil and made him indifferent. The idea that occupied

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

him was none the less absorbing because it was a morbid fancy. Here was a clever son of the age, ingenious and ardent, who happened to have set him up for connoisseurs to worship. This servant of his altar had all the new learning in science and all the old reverence in faith; wouldn't he therefore put his knowledge at the disposal of his sympathy, his craft at the disposal of his love? Couldn't he be trusted to invent a remedy for a poor artist to whose art he had paid a tribute? If he couldn't, the alternative was hard: Dencombe would have to surrender to silence, unvindicated and undivined. The rest of the day and all the next he toyed in secret with this sweet futility. Who would work the miracle for him but the young man who could combine such lucidity with such passion? He thought of the fairy-tales of science and charmed himself into forgetting that he looked for a magic that was not of this world. Doctor Hugh was an apparition, and that placed him above the law. He came and went while his patient, who sat up, followed him with supplicating eyes. The interest of knowing the great author had made the young man begin "The Middle Years" afresh, and would help him to find a deeper meaning in its pages. Dencombe had told him what he "tried for;" with all his intelligence, on a first perusal, Doctor Hugh had failed to guess it. The baffled celebrity wondered then who in the world *would* guess it: he was amused once more at the thoroughness with which an intention could be missed. Yet he wouldn't rail at the general mind to-day—consoling as that ever had been; the revelation of his own slowness had seemed to make all stupidity sacred.

Doctor Hugh, after a little, was visibly worried, confessing, on inquiry, to a source of embarrassment at home. "Stick to the Countess—don't mind *me*," Dencombe said, repeatedly; for his companion was frank enough about the large lady's attitude. She was so jealous that she had fallen ill—she resented such a breach of allegiance. She paid so much for his fidelity that she must have it all; she refused him the right to other sympathies, charged him with scheming to make her die alone, for it was needless to point out how little Miss Vernham was a resource in trouble. When Doctor Hugh mentioned that the Countess would already have left Bournemouth if he hadn't kept her in bed, poor Dencombe held his arm tighter and said with decision: "Take her straight away." They had gone out together, walking back to the sheltered nook in which, the other day, they had met. The young man, who had given his companion a personal support, declared with emphasis that his conscience was clear—he could carry on two patients together. Didn't he dream, for his future, of a time when he should have to look after five hundred? Longing equally for virtue Dencombe replied that in this golden age no individual would pretend to have contracted with him for *all* his attention. On the part of the Countess was not such an avidity lawful? Doctor Hugh denied it, said there was no contract, but only a free understanding, and that a sordid servitude was impossible to a generous spirit; he liked, moreover, to talk about art, and that was the subject on which, this time, as they sat again together on the sunny bench, he tried most to engage the author of "The Middle Years." Dencombe, soaring again a little on the weak wings of convalescence, and still haunted by that happy notion of an organized rescue, found another strain of eloquence to plead the cause of a certain splendid "last manner," the very citadel, as it would prove, of his reputation, the stronghold into which his real treasure would be gathered. While his listener gave up the morning and the great still sea appeared to wait, he had a wonderful explanatory hour. Even for himself he was inspired as he told of what his treasure would consist—the precious metals he would dig from the mine, the jewels rare, festoons of rubies, he would hang between the columns of his temple. He was wonderful for himself, so thick his convictions crowded; but he was still more wonderful for Doctor Hugh, who assured him, none the less, that the very pages he had just published were already encrusted with

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

gems. The young man, however, panted for the combinations to come, and, before the face of the beautiful day, renewed to Dencombe his guarantee that his profession would hold itself responsible for such a life. Then he suddenly clapped his hand upon his watch-pocket and asked leave to absent himself for half an hour. Dencombe waited there for his return, but was at last recalled to the actual by the fall of a shadow across the ground. The shadow darkened into that of Miss Vernham, the young lady in attendance on the Countess; whom Dencombe, recognizing her, perceived so clearly to have come to speak to him, that he rose from his bench to acknowledge the civility. Miss Vernham, however, proved not particularly civil; she looked strangely agitated, and her type was now unmistakable.

"Excuse me if I inquire," she said, "whether it's too much to hope that you may be induced to leave Doctor Hugh alone." Then, before Dencombe, greatly disconcerted, could protest: "You ought to be informed that you stand in his light; that you may do him a terrible injury."

"Do you mean by causing the Countess to dispense with his services?"

"By causing her to disinherit him." Dencombe stared at this, and Miss Vernham pursued, in the gratification of seeing she could produce an impression: "It has depended on himself to come into something very handsome. He has had a magnificent prospect, but I think you've succeeded in spoiling it."

"Not intentionally, I assure you. Is there no hope the accident may be repaired?" Dencombe asked.

"She was ready to do anything for him. She takes great fancies, she lets herself go—it's her way. She has no relations, she's free to dispose of her money, and she's very ill."

"I'm very sorry to hear it," Dencombe stammered.

"Wouldn't it be possible for you to leave Bournemouth? *That's* what I've come to ask of you."

Poor Dencombe sank down on his bench. "I'm very ill myself, but I'll try!"

Miss Vernham still stood there with her colorless eyes and the brutality of her good conscience. "Before it's too late, please!" she said; and with this she turned her back, in order, quickly, as if it had been a business to which she could spare but a precious moment, to pass out of his sight.

Oh, yes, after this Dencombe was certainly very ill. Miss Vernham had upset him with her rough, fierce news; it was the sharpest shock to him to discover what was at stake for a penniless young man of fine parts. He sat trembling on his bench, staring at the waste of waters, feeling sick with the directness of the blow. He was indeed too weak, too unsteady, too alarmed; but he would make the effort to get away, for he couldn't accept the guilt of interference, and his honor was really involved. He would hobble home, at any rate, and then he would think what was to be done. He made his way back to the hotel and, as he went, had a characteristic vision of Miss Vernham's great motive. The Countess hated women, of course, Dencombe was lucid about that; so the hungry pianist had no personal hopes and could only console herself with the bold conception of helping Doctor Hugh in order either to marry him after he had got his money or to induce him to recognize her title to compensation and buy her off. If she had befriended him at a fruitful crisis he would really, as a man of delicacy, and she knew what to think of that point, have to reckon with her.

At the hotel Dencombe's servant insisted on his going back to bed. The invalid had talked about catching a train and had begun with orders to pack; after which his shaken nerves had yielded to a queer head and a rising temperature. He consented to see his physician, who immediately was sent for, but he wished it to be understood that his door was irrevocably closed to Doctor Hugh. He had his plan, which was so fine that he rejoiced in it after getting back to bed. Doctor Hugh, suddenly finding himself snubbed without mercy, would, in natural disgust and to the joy of Miss Vernham, renew his allegiance to the Countess. When his physician arrived Dencombe

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

learned that he was feverish and that this was very wrong; he was to cultivate calmness and try, if possible, not to think. For the rest of the day he wooed stupidity; but there was an ache that kept him sentient, the probable sacrifice of his "extension," the limit of his course. His medical adviser was anything but pleased; his successive relapses were ominous. He charged this personage to put out a strong hand and take Doctor Hugh off his mind—it would contribute so much to his being quiet. The agitating name, in his room, was not mentioned again, but his security was a smothered fear, and it was not confirmed by the receipt, at ten o'clock that evening, of a telegram which his servant opened and read for him and to which, with an address in London, the signature of Miss Vernham was attached. "Beseech you to use all influence to make our friend join us here in the morning. Countess much the worse for dreadful journey, but everything may still be saved." The two ladies had gathered themselves up and had been capable in the afternoon of a spiteful revolution. They had started for the capital, and if the elder one, as Miss Vernham had announced, was very ill, she had wished to make it clear that she was proportionately reckless. Poor Dencombe, who was not reckless, and who only desired that everything should indeed be "saved," sent this missive straight off to the young man's lodging, and had on the morrow the pleasure of knowing that he had quitted Bournemouth by an early train.

Two days later he pressed in with a copy of a literary journal in his hand. He had returned because he was nervous, and for the pleasure of flourishing the great review of "The Middle Years." Here at least was something adequate—it rose to the occasion; it was an acclamation, a reparation, a critical attempt to place the author in the niche he had fairly won. Dencombe accepted and submitted; he made neither objection nor inquiry, for old complications had returned, and he had had two atrocious days. He was convinced not only that he should never again leave his bed, so that his young friend might pardonably remain, but that the demand he should make on the patience of beholders would be very moderate indeed. Doctor Hugh had been to town, and he tried to find in his eyes some confession that the Countess was pacified and his legacy clinched; but all he could see there was the light of his juvenile joy in two or three of the phrases of the newspaper. Dencombe couldn't read them, but when his visitor had insisted on repeating them more than once he was able to shake an unintoxicated head. "Ah, no, they would have been true of what I *could* have done!"

"What people 'could have done' is mainly what they *have* done," Doctor Hugh contended.

"Mainly, yes; but I've been an idiot!" said Dencombe.

Doctor Hugh did remain; the end was coming fast. Two days later Dencombe observed to him, by way of the feeblest of jokes, that there would now be no question whatever of a second chance. At this the young man stared; then he exclaimed: "Why, it has come to pass—it has come to pass! The second chance has been the public's—the chance to find the point of view, to pick up the pearl!"

"Oh, the pearl!" poor Dencombe uneasily sighed. A smile as cold as a winter sunset flickered on his drawn lips as he added: "The pearl is the unwritten—the pearl is the unalloyed, the *rest*, the lost!"

From that moment he was less and less present, heedless, to all appearance, of what went on around him. His disease was definitely mortal, of an action as relentless, after the short arrest that had enabled him to fall in with Doctor Hugh, as a leak in a great ship. Sinking steadily, though this visitor, a man of rare resources, now cordially approved by his physician, showed endless art in guarding him from pain, poor Dencombe kept no reckoning of favor or neglect, betrayed no symptom of regret or speculation. Yet toward the last he gave a sign of having noticed that for two days Doctor Hugh had not been in his room, a sign that consisted of his suddenly opening his eyes to ask of him if

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

he had spent the interval with the Countess.

"The Countess is dead," said Doctor Hugh. "I knew that in a particular contingency she wouldn't resist. I went to her grave."

Dencombe's eyes opened wider. "She left you 'something handsome?'"

The young man gave a laugh almost too light for a chamber of woe. "Never a penny. She roundly cursed me."

"Cursed you?" Dencombe murmured.

"For giving her up. I gave her up for *you*. I had to choose," his companion explained.

"You chose to let a fortune go?"

"I chose to accept, whatever they might be, the consequences of my infatuation," smiled Doctor Hugh. Then, to jest more soothingly: "A fortune be hanged! It's *your* fault if I can't get your things out of my head."

The immediate tribute to his jest was a long, bewildered moan; after which, for many hours, for many days, Dencombe lay motionless and absent. A response so absolute, such a glimpse of a definite result and such a proof of honor worked together in his mind and, producing a strange commotion, slowly altered and transfigured his despair. The sense of cold submersion left him—he seemed to float without an effort. The incident was extraordinary as evidence, and it shed an intenser light. At the last he signed to Doctor Hugh to listen, and, when he was down on his knees by the pillow, brought him very near.

"You've made me think that it's all a delusion."

"Not your glory, my dear friend," stammered the young man.

"Not my glory—what there is of it! It *is* glory—to have been tested, to have had our little quality and cast our little spell. The thing is to have made somebody care. *You're* crazy, of course, but that doesn't affect the law."

"You're a great success!" said Doctor Hugh, putting into his voice the ring of all young cheer.

Dencombe lay taking this in; then he gathered strength to speak once more. "A second chance—*that's* the delusion. There never was to be but one. We work in the dark—we do what we can—we give what we have. Our doubt is our passion and our passion is our task. The rest is the madness of art."

"If you've doubted, if you've despaired you've always *done* it," his visitor subtly argued.

"We've done *something*," Dencombe conceded.

"Something is all. It's the feasible. It's *you!*"

"Comforter!" poor Dencombe ironically sighed.

"But it's true," insisted his friend.

"It's true. It's frustration that doesn't count."

"Frustration's only life," said Doctor Hugh.

"Yes, it's what passes." Poor Dencombe was barely audible, but he had marked with the words the virtual end of his first and only chance.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DRAWN BY ALBERT LYNCH

ENGRAVED BY FRANK FRENCH

A PLAYMATE

[*Contributed by the artist to the Exhibition Number of Scribner's Magazine.*]

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DRAWN BY C. S. REINHART

THE COQUETTE

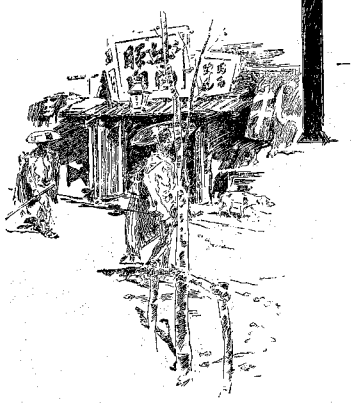
[*Contributed by the artist to the Exhibition Number of Scribner's Magazine.*]

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AN ARTIST IN JAPAN.

By Robert Blum.

With Illustrations by the Author.



IT was hot in Tokyo. The pleasant gray days of a month ago had been followed by days gloomy and threatening. We had had much wind and rain; but now, with approaching midsummer the sun blazed overhead in a clear, hard sky, fierce and punishing in its heat. The streets, one blinding glare and unpeopled, had a deserted appearance. The shop-curtains hung limp and dusty, unlifted by hand of buyer; all color fled, and in the dazzling whiteness the shadows fell sharp with inky blackness. The toiling coolies, sweltering, hugged the scanty shade, and rested often. Kurumaya, the cabbies of Japan, sprawled or crouched by their 'rikishas, listless and indifferent to fares;—in the protecting angle of the compound gate sat the ameya, in blinking, nodding, drowsiness, his stand of sticky and melting wares undefended against eager swarms of energetic flies. The suffocating heat quivered as it rose, distorting all objects as through a wavy pane—the great city's pulse beat feebly; languor and prostration was felt everywhere. The familiar forms of itinerant venders and wandering players, the clog-mender, alms-seeking priests, and busy merchant had disappeared. Lagging clerks, with cloth-bound bundles and straggling groups of foot-sore pilgrims in dusty, stencilled garments, on long journeys bent, were the only ones to impede the indefatigable street-sprinkler, who pulled his primitive cart up, across and down the empty thoroughfares. The stream of traffic, never noisy, was at an ebb—had fallen to a thin and silent current, and only eddied now and then about the kori shops, where bright-faced girls with tied-up sleeves served tumblers piled high with "planed" ice, cool and cheating into temporary relief the exhaustion of the scorching heat.

I longed to be out of it. I had "done the sights," had been to "matsuri" *fête* and flower-show; had dissipated recklessly in the mild orgies of tea-house dinners, and geisha dances—dinners that I always compared with the music accompanying them, and wondered when they would really begin. I had seen the temples—the theatres where, in the draughty interiors, I felt myself moved in the general outpourings of enthusiasm and joined—perhaps from other causes—in the universal rustling of paper handkerchiefs, the loud commotion of the blowing of noses at the pathetic climaxes. I had seen Fine Art exhibitions and firework displays of all kinds. I had even limped away from an ancient and classical "No" dance, a sadder if not wiser man. Bric-à-brac itself had lost its fascination—I was in a dangerous mood. I couldn't see my way to get to work. An irritability dulling all curiosity and all interest had come over me; everything seemed to fade; the small and inevitable discomforts of travel were magnified; I was tired of being stared at. In this distorted state of mind I had but to close my eyes to see the people exist as so many figures with necks pivoted like an owl's, and no matter in what view—side or front—full-faced unblinking in a stony stare.

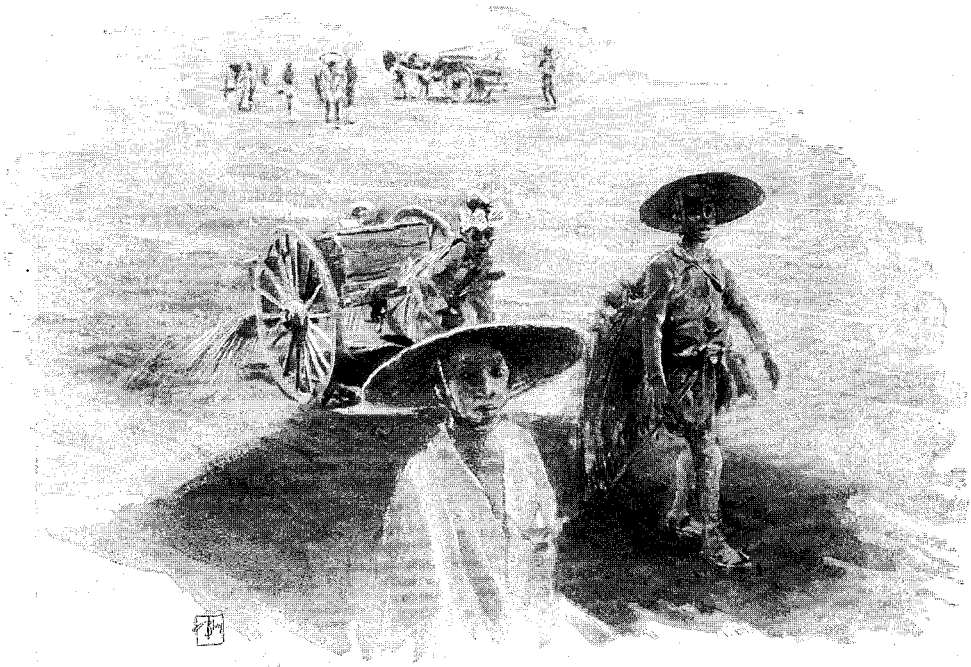
It was early one drizzly morning that my newly found friend and voluntary guide joined me in the second-class compartment an instant before the train

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DRAWN BY ROBERT BLUM.

A Clog-maker.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



A Watering-Cart.

started for Enoshima. The trip — at least as far as I had any settled idea of it—was to be in the nature of a skirmish, taking in Enoshima, Hakone, and round about Fuji-San; — an endeavor to bring into action my untried arms —a heavy field equipment of sketching-gear, including Gatling supplement of note-books—and, if all went well, to venture farther into the enemy's country by train, 'rikisha, and afoot, and to lay waste all in a roundabout way even to Nikko.

Just exactly how it was to be done I didn't know; in fact, when we held our counsel of war at the hotel there were moments when Katsushika san, in the enthusiasm of at last becoming a practical aid, got so ensnarled and tangled in the recital of "the way to do it," that I was more than ready to believe in its not being possible at all. "Oh, yes! Me sure can do! Yis, sir. You shoery arr right if go with me!" said he. But while I felt, as he expressed it, "surely all right," as to ability in looking after myself, I was solicitous solely on his behalf. Even if I were shunted on to some side track it could hardly matter, since all I wanted was to get away from the city, and so long as I found it possible to work it mattered not where we went. And so we had set out.

Down to Yokohama first, a short delay, a shifting of sketching-traps, and contraction as far as possible for a few more beclogged wayfarers; then off for Fujisawa, at which place we arrive at 8 A.M. A lonely little station, with even more hopelessness than is general with all wayside stations the world over. An open, sandy gap in all directions, fringed here and there in a ragged fashion by small catch-penny tea-booths. In close vicinity to one of these a collection of jinrikishas, to which, while I stand guard over bag and baggage, Katsushika san makes his way. He is soon in the midst of men and of a lively bargain; as I see the crowd melt away, leaving him all alone, a word or action brings back the whole lot again and again. Finally I shoulder one of the bags and walk over to see what's up.

"What's the matter?"

"Oh, she say don't go!" he says, detaching himself for a moment. Suspecting, from experience on other occasions, I ask how much he has offered the men.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Say don't go ress than dorrar-an-harf. I thing hifty sen ver' prenty."

"Well, how far is Enoshima from here?"

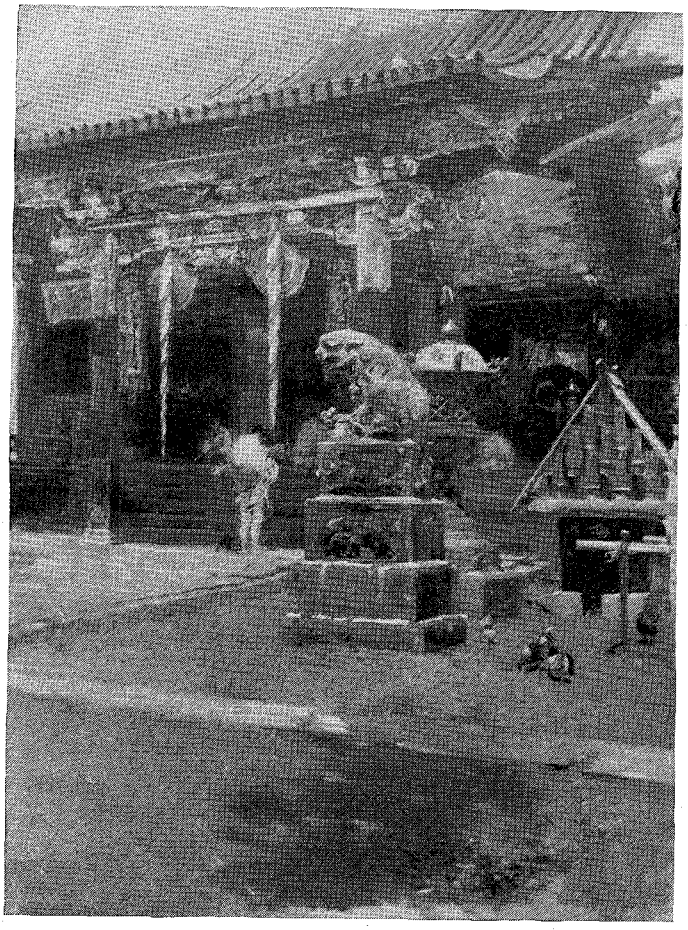
"Jinrikisha-man say about hive mire —say road ver' ver' bad." And all this time lending an ear, he adds joyfully, but with impassive face: "See, I know she take—take sure. Now make seventy-hive sen arready."

"Oh, don't bother about it — let's take——" but he was in the thick of it; and as I had learned already, it is as easy to catch a dog slipped from a leash as to turn him, now his nose was coldly ferreting out the bottom price. I sat down in one of the dank tea-stalls, lit and finished a cigarette until everything was settled to his satisfaction. Presently he came, with three demure jinrikisha-men in tow, officiously radiant. "Sorry I make wait so rong. Of course you know, I don rike pay more than arr right." One jinrikisha is piled with our things—we climb into the other two, and away over heavy sandy roads, past bamboo groves and isolated little homesteads. In one or two places there is a small gathering of these thatched houses, and the road, as it passes through, has all the appearance of being a part of the backyard, so unrestrained in juxtaposition is the arrangement of road to house.

Everything even in this sandy soil is rankly green. The sun is beginning to break its way out; the air, heavy and humid, makes it no light task for the men. They are perspiring profusely—I can say copiously, as I have seen my man when resting take off his towel and wring it with a result that would vie creditably with a wet dish-cloth—and I am glad when we pull up at a little wayside tea-stall at the foot of a rather steep, sandy slope, to have them rest. Off come what few garments they have, and a brisk mopping and rubbing-down takes place, and as I watch them presently dropping down to a quiet chat and smoke, with a cup or two of tea, I ask casually, "How much farther do we go?" "This is end—we must wark now;" and to my rather astonished question, "Why, where's Enoshima?" K. points up the sand-bank. Sure enough on gaining the top we look down on a long narrow beach—in fact a mere strip of sand running out into the sea, a peninsula—ending a quarter of a mile away in an island-like prominence—Enoshima. Striking for the hard shore-sand we walk along the beach and soon reach the town built on, or rather clinging to, the rocks of this peculiar formation. As we pass through the large stone torii at the entrance of the town and ascend the steep street we are greeted on all sides with the shrill cries of welcome so universal in Japan. The narrow street is lined for the greater part of its length with inns, tea- and lodging-houses, and as we pass the open fronts, cries of "I-r-r-r-a-a-r-shai-i-i-s!" from bevies of girls resound

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

like so many salvos—scattered—broken only to give place to renewed broadsides as we pass the rival inn beyond.



A Japanese Temple.

Near the top of this "shute" we find quarters in the same tea-house where Sir Edwin Arnold had not so long before been a delighted guest—the Iwa moto ya.

There has been recently, by his master pen, a description of it in the pages of this Magazine; one which makes it impossible to do again what Sir Edwin has so charmingly accomplished in his "Japonica." Suffice it to say that I found it full of picturesque material. Nor was it long before my faithful friend caught the infection and began to develop unsuspected qualities in his groping desire to please. As he learned my needs the increasing tax on his ingenuity to meet them only opened new vistas of fertile resources. He was never at a loss. I had only to intimate—at least succeed in getting *him* to understand—what I wanted, and if mortal endeavor could, it was done. I remember on one occasion I was sketching from the second-story room—the whole house literally at my feet through the blandishments of the artful one—and had returned one morning to complete the drawing. The people had so behung the entire street with thousands of little banners that they fairly choked it. It was a "matsuri," and nothing could be done. He of many parts had slipped away. I caught flying glimpses of him dodging

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DRAWN BY ROBERT BLUM

The Flower Market.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in and out of the houses, and after a little time a universal demolition of the festoons was in full swing, in the midst of which he reappeared and said, with a smile of enjoyment at his own success: "They take down." On our way inn-ward that evening I casually remarked that I hoped he had not forgotten to make proper acknowledgment for the extreme kindness shown.

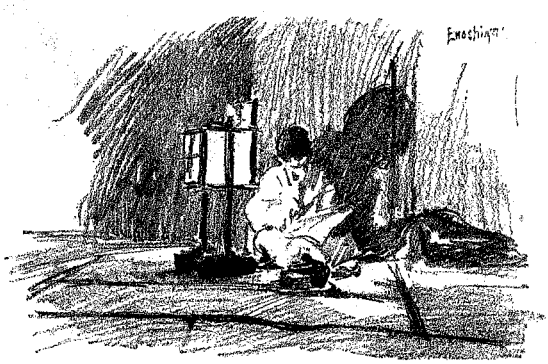
Japanese Pillow.

"Oh, yis—of course. I give 'em sugar." Ingenuous boy. He had gone to the man below, in whose house I was working, *bought* sugar from him, overwhelmed him with the kindness of his purchase, and then set out with the gift thriftily divided to achieve a like result in other directions.*

In quoting from my diary I cannot hope to show by its crude fragmentary jottings of what, and in what the charm of Enoshima exists; and I only give them as perhaps showing a glimpse of my day's doings.

"July 24, 1890.— . . . (Iwa moto Inn.) We have two rooms in a small, detached building off the garden around which the rambling hotel is scattered. Everything about it is as yet untouched by kodakistic influences, although K. tells me the proprietor is troubled with visions — air-castles may they remain — of befitting annexes for foreigners. . . . At 10 o'clock started out for a walk about the island—for so I am told Enoshima at times becomes, when the water breaks over the thin strip of beach—and found our way to the cave. Amused to see the boys diving among the rocks for pennies which K. flung into the water. Back to hotel at 12, and after an omelette and fish, at 3 down to beach. Weather warm, and feeling reckless went out in my pajamas—people in street not noticing with more than the customary stare—and had a fine bath. Slipped on K.'s clogs, and so back to town, where at foot of street stepped in to buy a pair of straw sandals for myself. . . . Girl has just come in to make up futons for the night. K. is arranging, by the doubling of one, a make-shift pillow. An unsavory smelling green mosquito-net, with a mixture of sea-weed and mushroom about it, fixes the arrangement for the night.

"July 25th.—Woke up about 7.30. A wretched, broken night's rest—feeling as if I should come apart in numerous places—sad to realize there are so many in one's anatomy that can ache so damnably. Or rather, it's only one ache, but that takes in everything down to one's eyelashes. Sat up till long past 12 o'clock, after trying to get accustomed to the—well, not soft—bedding and what it contained. Fleas, fleas, and a few more fleas, which, added to the stifling stuffiness caused by the closing in of the whole house, made it like trying to sleep inside a largish dry-goods box. To wake up often, and as often see the inert bundle of peaceful-



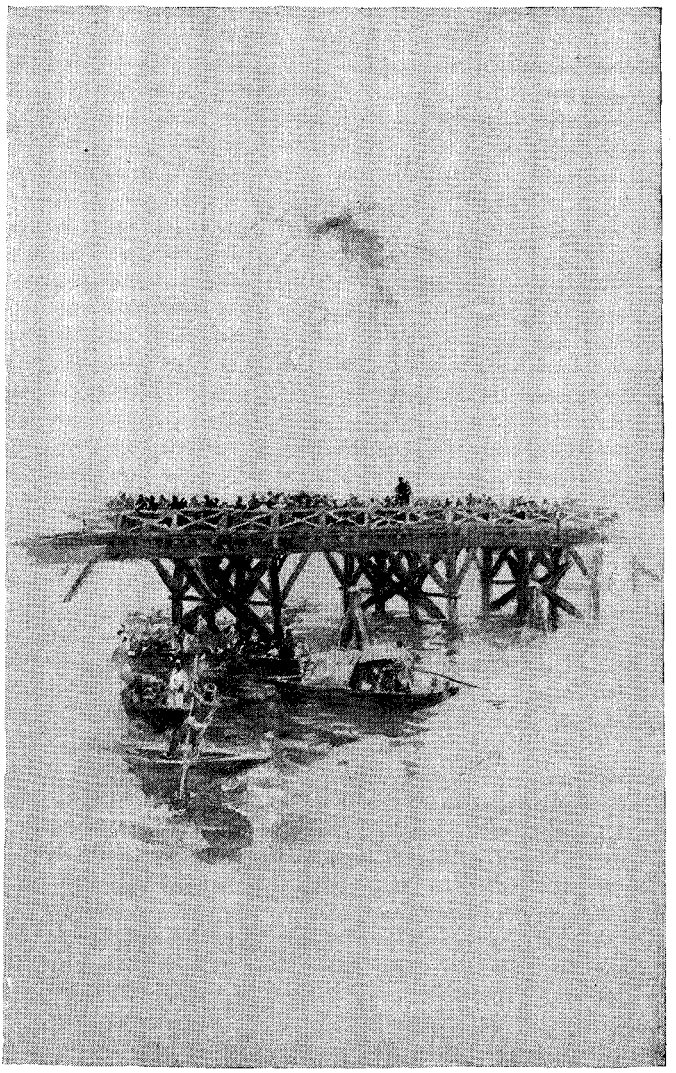
Night at Enoshima.

* As he afterward explained, "Of coorse you see they don rike take down because matsuri, an' many pirgrims come. Pirgrims always go where mos frags." It seems these bands, clubs, societies, or guilds that annually perform pilgrimages—often of protracted length—carry these bits of cotton cloth emblazoned with the respective name of club or guild, and leave them at shrine, temple, and inn. In the latter case they become a flaunting letter of recommendation, highly treasured, as I learned on more than one unsuccessful attempt to inveigle them.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ness under K.'s mosquito-netting was too much. I finally crawled over and blew out the andon. Day gloomy, raining occasionally. From veranda made drawing of some houses and hillside. About four, the weather clearing, took a walk toward some fishing villages scattered along the shore. Passing through, came to one larger, containing a few inns, tea-houses, and extensive grounds of picturesquely situated temple. Stepped in at a tailor's to order a pair of tabi for myself. . . . Am living on milk and tea and 'castira'* in the morning, fish and eggs rest of day. Had an *amma* this evening—the stiffness hanging about me all day.

"July 28th.—Day bright, sunny, and pleasant. Up by 7, and after the usual skirmishing on the part of K. for breakfast 'castira' in the shops outside, went down the street. After some talk, K. got permission to use room over a shop to commence drawing. In afternoon to Benten Cave to work on drawing begun yesterday; took shelter, rain coming on, in cave. The rocks, with the wildish water swashing and splashing over them, a fine foreground for the distant silhouette of Fuji in the threatening gloom. A treat to-day in the shape of a few slices of bread, which K. tells me the wife of the proprietor, in the kindness of a woman's heart, got for me from some missionary hiding away somewhere hereabouts; perhaps there is something after all in missionary work.



Daytime Fireworks.

"July 31st.—. . . . Every once in a while bunches of pilgrims come straggling through the town, with large straw hats and squares of matting slung across their shoulders, all dressed in rough, white garments, carrying sometimes staff and bell—a pict-

* Castira—from "Castilla"—Sponge-cake, is so called because introduced by the Spaniards.

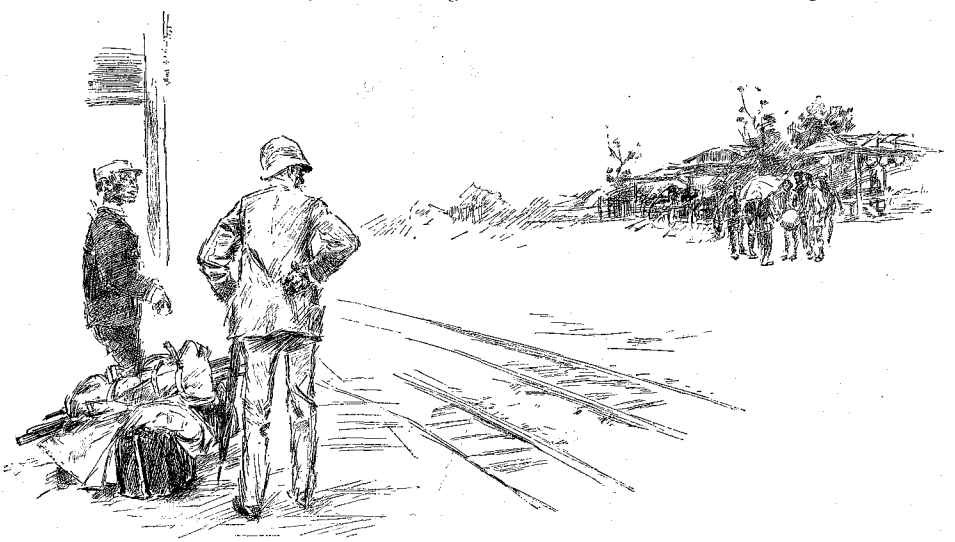
PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

uresque bit of life. Noticed a good many were women—difficult at a distance to distinguish men from women, as all dressed alike. Charmed with the place, and hard at work getting as many notes as possible. The only drawback—Japanese chow. It is more than monotonous; with the exception of that piece of missionary bread all I've had these seven days is fish and eggs, rice and tea; all combinations tried and exhausted, nor does difference of rotation cheat the stomach. Notwithstanding the poor food I shall stay, but have suggested through K. the desire of placing a flea in our dreaming landlord's ear. For some reason he doesn't see fit to do so.* He can and won't; I would, if I could speak the blamed language. . . . Day windy and stormy, so stayed indoors to make some pastel notes from window—they worked pasty in all the dampness of the weather. Went to rocks in the afternoon; water very high; it was fine. Sat down to work, K. holding umbrella over me when it rained, but difficult to do anything as wind lifted and knocked the pad about on my knees. K. also not feeling well gave up after a time. . . ."

* He only explained afterward that it would have been a rude thing to complain, and only mentioned to the landlord our grievances when coming away. "You see, I don rike say anything then, the randrord thing I'm not ver' perite if I do."

I had spent ten delicious days of rambling, climbing, sketching in and about this charming little place, when one evening as we sprawled on the floor over our fish and eggs, the proprietor came in at the sliding-door, and, getting down on his knees, touched his head to the floor, murmuring apologies for this disturbance. The buff envelope of a telegram was in his hand, and lifting it first to his brow, he passed the portentous thing over to me. I tore it open and flattened out the colored sheet on the matted floor. Its pink Volapük was a revelation of clearness—its conciseness and the brevity of its wit an exquisite joke. Certainly, I would return to Tokyo by all means, at once.

Taking the cup of saké Katsushika san had just filled, I said, "Well! here's to the boatman's daughter—and Tokyo"—a playful allusion to the havoc which a fleeting glimpse of a very pretty musmee had inflicted on a certain barbarian's heart, occasioning the draining of many a thimbleful of saké since that memorable day at the riverside in Tokyo.



"A lonely little station."

"You thing must goin' back to Tokyo?"

"Yes! Peter. There is a class of men called editors over in America, hard-hearted and utterly regardless of other people's feelings—hopelessly devoid of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DRAWN BY ROBERT BLUM.

An Actor.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

all human sympathy I might say, who when they want a thing want it er-r bad, so to say, and want it done quick; and the sooner a fellow does it the more he'll find life congenial and pleasant all around. Petey," for so I had begun to call him (his other name was forever clogging my mouth; it might do for holidays when there wasn't anything especial to do), "Petey, my boy—don't you *ever* go and have anything to do with them!" To which Peter says no, dubiously, and seeing his hopeless stare I continued to explain: "Yes, they are anxious to get a sight of my drawings—I must return to Tokyo and make some nice pictures to send to America. But cheer up, we won't be cheated out of the sight of old Fuji, since we are so near, let me crawl at least to her feet, and then you can take me back."

I shall never forget the effect of the morning we took our reluctant departure from the charming little place. Straggling along over the ribbon-like strip of sand, the jinrikishas ahead with bag and baggage, I stopped often to look back. It was the most beautiful morning imaginable, the air clear as crystal, the sun still low and throwing long, thin shadows from even the smallest and slightest objects on the beach. Our own shadows stretched away across to the farther beach, where a group of nude fishermen were busy hauling in fish, their bright pinkish skins contrasting strongly against the heavy, inky, blue sea and pearly fringing of surf. Out over the water in the distance rose stately Fuji-San, clean cut and sharp, as I had never seen her before. A few tender fleecy clouds encircled her brow and floated meltingly in a sky so pure and serene—it all seemed more like a child's happy awakening. Enoshima lay, a slumbering silhouette with here and there some isolated thread of smoke stealing slowly upward. Unbroken and untouched was the peaceful gloom of tree and rock, save on the eastern edge, where the sun embroidered a glittering fringe and turned to gold the breaking water on the rock-bound shore below. In my leave-taking it was like a caressing benediction on the part of nature; the kind and friendly face smiling a last farewell with unspoken wishes to be remembered—a radiant look for a speedy return.

We reached Fujisawa in plenty of time to catch the first train for Yumoto, and after a short ride through very interesting broken and hilly country arrived at Kodzu about 8 A.M. From here, so Peter informed me, we should patronize the new tram in preference to the frisky 'rikisha, gaining thereby, as he sagely pointed out, in pocket what we might lapse in time.

How pleasant was the feeling of leaving things generally in the hands of Providence—exemplified in this especial case in the slight figure of Peter; what a saving of energy and bewilderment in distracted search for information regarding routes, time, trains, tickets, checks, and all else pertaining to railway travel. Pleasant to be told, "Jus' wait here," or "Prease, go there tirr I come," and to light a meditative cigarette the while, watching the people with rush and push getting themselves and leading others into entanglements as to right trains—to see them, like a disturbed ant-hill, heading in all directions to board the wrong ones. Maliciously pleasant to see them in headlong flight stop a duty-pressed official who pointed silently, and tear along till they met another, who as considerately pointed back toward the place they left, until, exhausted and resigned, they squat down beside their bundles to wait till their own train, three hours later, would take them to their desired destination—it remaining always a mystery unsolved as to why any train shouldn't have done so in the first place. Delightfully pleasant and profitable, too, to study, besides the character, customs, and ways of the people, the costumes, the color, everything that a painter calls "Just *things*," and to be able to do all this by simply saying, "Yes, Petey, all right, go ahead," just to show that you have a knack of knowing how things should be done and are confident of success. Jewel of a Peter.

Where *he* gets his information I know not. He *gets* it, which is of more importance. So now I dodge dutifully

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

after him when he comes to get me, and we steer our way through the throng to the cool tramway shed.

"—— the port of rest from troublous toyle."

But not for long, since with a start, and before we are aware of how it happens, we shelve upon one another in the little car as the horse makes a wild break for the opening. Over the short, sharp curve we go, unharmed, however, the small driver holding back with reins up and back ear-high, the conductor equally diminutive, but as efficiently grinding away at the brake in the rear. Once out in the open glare they let the stallion have his head, and away we go right merrily, "teetering," heaving, and reeling over the straight, long, and dusty road ahead. The passengers, silent, with bobbing heads and rattling clogs, are of all types and character, from the shell-back conservatism in hakama and haori, to lenient liberalism in tile and gaiters. There is even a specimen of a "ne plus ultra" radicalism in colored shirt, white collar, and patent leathers. Petey knows him, him of the cuffs, cane, and natty straw hat; and has already ducked his head with the pleasure of seeing him. I have heard in all the din his labored, short sighs of exhaling breath, sounding like a subdued suppression of a cough, which accompanies all proper Japanese bows; and then he turns to

A Fish Vender.

me with pleasurable excitement to whisper that "that is erdest son of Viscount ——," and begins to tell me much that is of much interest—to Peter.

There is a halt, the conductor is busy watering the horse. The knowing animal no sooner sees the bucket than he expectantly throws forward his head with opened jaws, into which the boy splashes dippers full of water, and finishes the performance by taking out this extraordinary animal's tongue with one hand and generously plastering it with rock-salt from the other. A few passengers get out here, giving us the decidedly preferable elbow-room as equivalent of their company. It is swelteringly hot; our little band is making it as comfortable as possible. He of the hakama has tied a towel about his head to save his freshly made queue from floating dust, and slipping his toes from

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

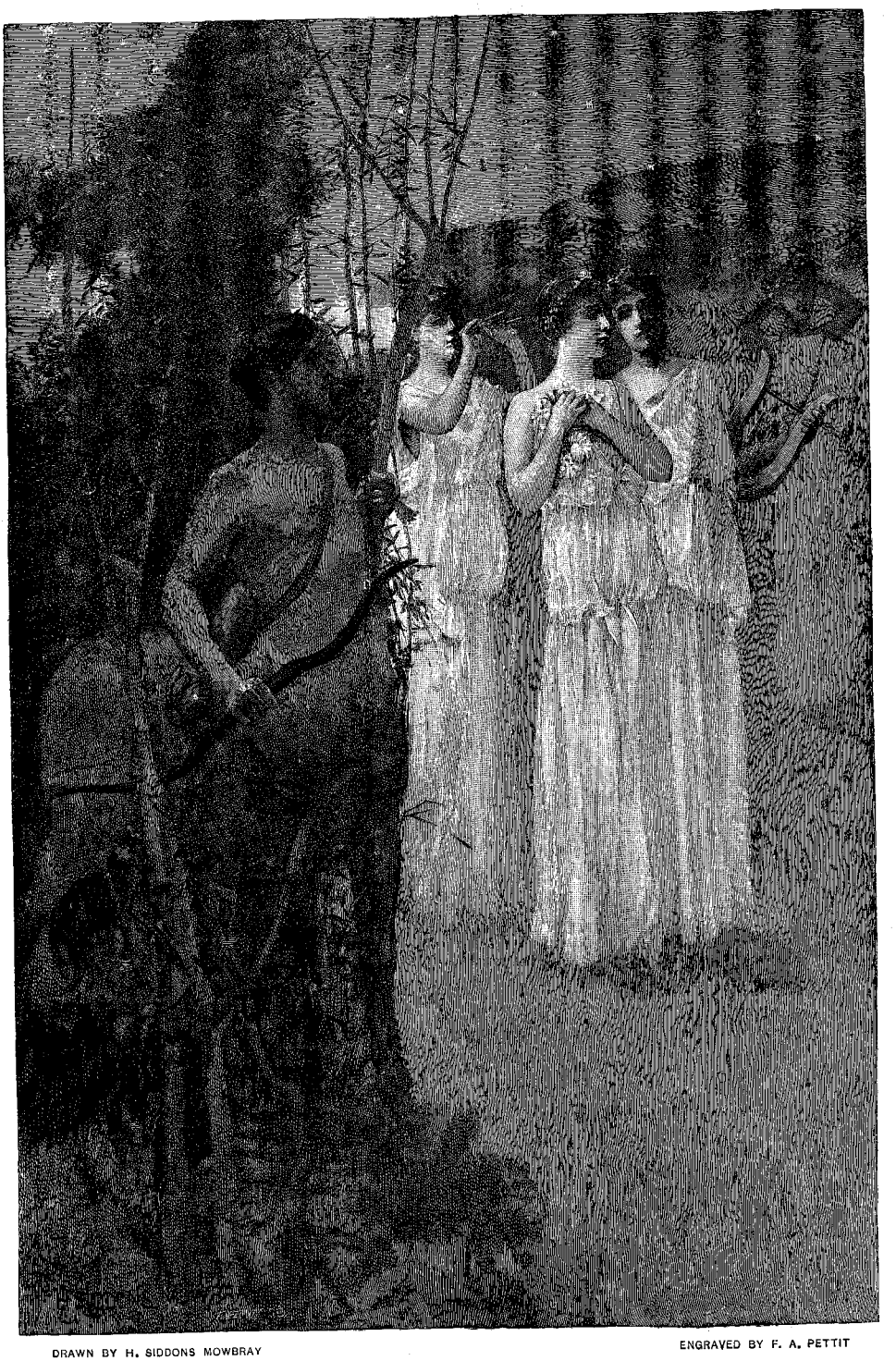
his clogs, sits like a mollified Daruma.* He of the tile, which all this time is fraternizing in the demoralizing company of a slobbering tea-pot and saucerless cup under the seat, has followed suit by pulling off his gaiters, and lolls with speculative gaze riveted on me when not momentarily distracted over his tiny pipe. The immaculate one is propped up in the farther end bored and listless, the pristine splendor of his collar undergoing a pitiable delapsation. All are fanning more or less vigorously, with petulant tucks and pecks at coat and kimono, all fervently praying for release from the fiery oven. The only one unphased and full of energy still, our little driver in a German military cap, drawing recklessly on a stock of undreamed-of vitality, in exuberant flourishes of whip, and tooting of horn, and turning of crank, as we dash along. He is the only one, too, that gets what little air there is.

Boatman's Daughter.

Finally—after one more halt where we take on a fresh beast—the wild ride comes to an end, and I am counting our bundles to see that Peter has properly helped me by bringing them altogether.

* A familiar figure in Japanese Art, leg- and arm-less, is always represented enveloped in a sack-like garment which leaves exposed only his face, fierce and terrifying in expression. Daruma was a follower of Shaka, and teacher of Buddhism, who came from China and founded the Zen sect.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



DRAWN BY H. SIDDONS MOWBRAY

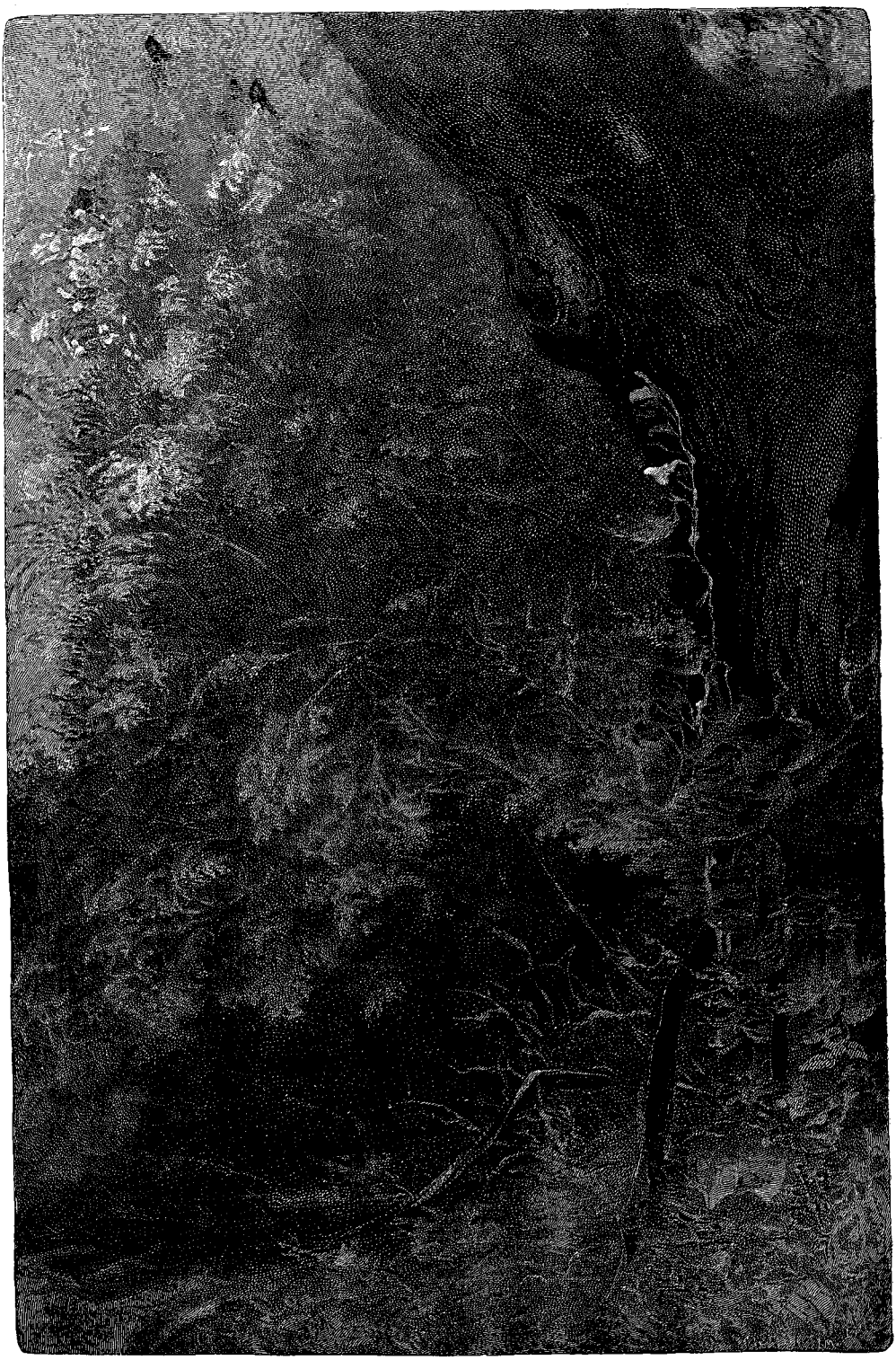
ENGRAVED BY F. A. PETTIT

THE CENTAUR

[*Contributed by the artist to the Exhibition Number of Scribner's Magazine.*]

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



ENGRAVED FROM NATURE BY W. B. CLOSSON

THE HEART OF THE WOODS

[*Contributed by the artist to the Exhibition Number of Scribner's Magazine.*]

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

JERSEY AND MULBERRY.

By H. C. Bunner.

I FOUND this letter and comment in an evening paper, some time ago, and I cut the slip out and kept it for its cruelty:

To the Editor of the Evening ——.

Sir: In yesterday's issue you took occasion to speak of the organ-grinding nuisance, about which I hope you will let me ask you the following questions: Why must decent people all over town suffer these pestilential beggars to go about torturing our senses, and practically blackmailing the listeners into paying them to go away? Is it not a most ridiculous excuse on the part of the police, when ordered to arrest these vagrants, to tell a citizen that the city license exempts these public nuisances from arrest? Let me ask, Can the city by any means legalize a common-law misdemeanor? If not, how can the city authorities grant exemption to these sturdy beggars and vagrants by their paying for a license? The Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure, it seems, provide for the punishment of gamblers, dive-keepers, and other disorderly persons, among whom organ-grinders fall, as being people who beg, and exhibit for money, and create disorder. If this is so, why can the police not be forced to intervene and forbid them their outrageous behavior? for these fellows do not only not know or care for the observance of the city ordinance, which certainly is binding on them, but, relying on a fellow-feeling of vulgarity with the mob, resist all attempts made

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to remove them from the exercise of their most fearful beggary, which is not even tolerated any longer at Naples.

R.

NEW YORK, February 20th.

[Our correspondent's appeal should be addressed to the Board of Aldermen and the Mayor. They consented to the licensing of the grinders in the face of a popular protest.—ED. EVENING ——.]

Now certainly that was not a good letter to write, and is not a pleasant letter to read; but the worst of it is, I am afraid that you could never make the writer of it understand why it is unfair and unwise and downright cruel.

For I think we can figure out the personality of that writer pretty easily. She is a nice old or middle-aged lady, unmarried, of course; well-to-do, and likely to leave a very comfortable fortune behind her when she leaves all worldly things; and accustomed to a great deal of deference from her nephews and nieces. She is occasionally subject to nervous headaches, and she wrote this letter while she had one of her

headaches. She had been lying down and trying to get a wink of sleep when the organ-grinder came under the window. It was a new organ and very loud, and its organ-grinder was proud of it and ground it with all his might, and it was certainly a very annoying instrument to delicate ears and sensitive nerves.

Now, she might have got rid of the nuisance at once by a very simple expedient. If she had sent Abigail, her maid, down to the street, with a dime, and told her to say: "Sicka lady, no playa," poor Pedro would have swung his box of whistles over his shoulder and trudged contentedly on. But, instead, she sent Abigail down without the dime, and with instructions to threaten the man with immediate arrest and imprisonment. And Abigail went down and scolded the man with the more vigor that she herself had been scolded all day on account of the headache. And so Pedro just grinned at her in his exasperating furrin way, and played on until he got good and ready to go. Then he went, and the old lady sat down and wrote that letter, and gave it to Abigail to post.

Later in the afternoon the old lady drove out, and the fresh air did her a world of good, and she stopped at a toy store and bought some trifles for sister Mary's little girl, who had the measles. Then she came home, and after dinner she read Mr. Jacob Riis's book, "How the Other Half Lives;" and she shuddered at the picture of the Jersey Street slums on the title page, and shuddered more as she read of the fourteen people packed in one room, and of the suffering and squalor and misery of it all. And then she made a memorandum to give a larger check to the charitable society next time. Then she went to bed, not forgetting first to read her nightly chapter in the gospel of the carpenter's son of Nazareth. And she had quite forgotten all about the coarse and unchristian words she had written in the letter that was by that time passing through the hands of the weary night-shift of mail-clerks down in the General Post-office. And when she did read it in print, she was so pleased and proud of the fluency of her own diction, and so many of her nephews and nieces said so many admiring things about what she might have done if she had only gone in for literature, that it really never occurred to her at all to think whether she had been any more just and charitable than the poor ignorant man who had annoyed her.

She was especially pleased with the part that had the legal phraseology in it, and with the scornful rebuke of the police

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for their unwillingness to disobey municipal ordinances. That was founded partly on something that she had heard nephew John say once, and partly on a general idea she has that the present administration has forcibly usurped the city government.

Now, I have no doubt that when that organ-grinder went home at night, he and his large family laid themselves down to rest in a back room of the Jersey Street slum, and if it be so, I may sometimes see him when I look out of a certain window of the great red-brick building where my office is, for it lies on Mulberry Street, between Jersey and Houston. My own personal and private window looks out on Mulberry Street. It is in a little den at the end of a long string of low-partitioned offices stretching along the Mulberry Street side; and we who tenant them have looked out of the windows for so many years that we have got to know, at least by sight, a great many of the dwellers thereabouts. We are almost in the very heart of that "mob" on whose "fellow-feeling of vulgarity" the fellows who grind the organ rely to sustain them in their outrageous behavior. And, do you know, as we look out of those windows, year after year, we find ourselves growing to have a fellow-feeling of vulgarity with that same mob.

The figure and form which we know best are those of old Judge Phœnix—for so the office-jester named him when we first moved in, and we have known him by that name ever since. He is a fat old Irishman, with a clean-shaven face, who stands summer and winter in the side doorway that opens, next to the little grocery opposite, on the alley-way to the rear tenement. Summer and winter he is buttoned to his chin in a faded old black overcoat. Alone he stands for the most part, smoking his black pipe and teetering gently from one foot to the other. But sometimes a woman with a shawl over her head comes out of the alley-way and exchanges a few words with him before she goes to the little grocery to get a loaf of bread, or a half-pint of milk, or to make that favorite purchase of the poor—three potatoes, one turnip, one carrot, four onions, and the handful of kale—a "b'ilin'." And there is also another old man, a small and bent old man, who has some strange job that occupies odd hours of the day, who stops on his way to and from work to talk with the Judge. For hours and

hours they talk together, till one wonders how in the course of years they have not come to talk themselves out. What can they have left to talk about? If they had been Mezzofanti and Macaulay, talking in all known languages on all known topics, they ought certainly to have exhausted the resources of conversation long before this time.

Judge Phœnix must be a man of independent fortune, for he toils not, neither does he spin, and the lilies of the field could not lead a more simple vegetable life, nor stay more contentedly in one place. Perhaps he owns the rear tenement. I suspect so, for he must have been at one time in the labor-contract business. This, of course, is a mere guess, founded upon the fact that we once found the Judge away from his post and at work. It was at the time they were repaving Broadway with the great pavement. We discovered the Judge at the corner of Bleecker Street perched on a pile of dirt, doing duty as sub-section boss. He was talking to the drivers of the vehicles that went past him, through the half-blockaded thoroughfare, and he was addressing them, after the true professional con-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tractor's style, by the names of their loads.

"Hi there, sand," he would cry, "git along lively! Stone, it's you the boss wants on the other side of the street! Dhry-goods, there's no place for ye here; take the next turn!" It was a proud day for the old Judge, and I have no doubt that he talks it over still with his little bent old crony, and boasts of vain deeds that grow in the telling.

Judge Phœnix is not, however, without mute company. Fair days and foul are all one to the Judge, but on fair days his companion is brought out. In front of the grocery is a box with a sloping top, on which are little bins for vegetables. In front of this box, again, on days when it is not raining or snowing, a little girl of five or six comes out of the grocery and sets a little red chair.

Then she brings out a smaller girl yet, who may be two or three, a plump and puggy little thing; and down in the red chair big sister plunks little sister, and there till next meal-time little sister sits and never so much as offers to move. She must have been trained to this unchildlike self-imprisonment, for she is lusty and strong enough. Big sister works in the shop, and once in a while she comes out and settles little sister more comfortably in her red chair; and then sister has the sole moment of relief from a monotonous existence. She hammers on big sister's face with her fat little hands, and with such skill and force does she direct the blows that big sister often has to wipe her streaming eyes. But big sister always takes it in good part, and little sister evidently does it, not from any lack of affection, but in the way of healthy exercise. Then big sister wipes little sister's nose and goes back into the shop. I suppose there is some compact between them.

Of course there is plenty of child life all up and down the sidewalk on both sides, although little sister never joins in it. My side of the street swarms with Italian children, most of them from Jersey Street, which is really not a street, but an alley. Judge Phœnix's side is peopled with small Germans and Irish. I have noticed one peculiar thing about these children: they never change sides. They play together most amicably in the middle of the street or in the gutter, but neither ventures beyond its neutral ground.

Judge Phœnix and little sister are by far the most interesting figures to be seen from my windows, but there are many others whom we know. There is the Italian barber whose brother dropped dead while shaving a customer. You would never imagine, to see the simple and unaffected way in which he comes out to take the air once in a while, standing on the steps of his basement, and twirling his tin-backed comb in idle thought, that he had had such a distinguished death in his family. But I don't let him shave me.

Then there is Mamie, the pretty girl in the window with the lace-curtains, and there is her epileptic brother. He is insane, but harmless, and amusing, although rather trying to the nerves. He comes out of the house in a hurry, walks quickly up the street for twenty or thirty feet, then turns suddenly, as if he had forgotten something, and hurries back, to reappear two minutes later from the basement door, only to hasten wildly in another direction, turn back again, plunge into the basement door, emerge from the upper door, get half way down the block, forget it again, and go back to make a new combination of doors and exits. Sometimes he is ten or twenty minutes in the house at one time. Then we suppose he is having a fit. Now, it seems to me

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that that modest retirement shows consideration and thoughtfulness on his part.

In the window next to Mamie's is a little, putty-colored face, and a still smaller white face, that just peeps over the sill. One belongs to the mulatto woman's youngster. Her mother goes out scrubbing, and the little girl is alone all day. She is so much alone, that the sage-green old bachelor in the second den from mine could not stand it, last Christmas time, so he sent her a doll on the sly. That's the other face.

Then there is the grocer, who is a groceress, and the groceress's husband. I wish that man to understand, if his eye ever falls upon this page—for wrapping purposes, we will say—that, in the language of Mulberry Street, I am on to him. He has got a job recently, driving a bakery wagon, and he times his route so that he can tie up in front of his wife's grocery every day at twelve o'clock, and he puts in a solid hour of his employer's time helping his wife through the noonday rush. But he need not fear. In the interests of the higher morality I suppose I ought to go and tell his employer about it. But I won't. My morals are not that high.

Of course we have many across-the-street friends, but I cannot tell you of them all. I will only mention the plump widow who keeps the lunch-room and bakery on the Houston Street corner, where the boys go for their luncheon. It is through her that many interesting details of personal gossip find their way into this office.

Jersey Street, or at least the rear of it, seems to be given up wholly to the Italians. The most charming tenant of Jersey Street is the lovely Italian girl, who looks like a Jewess, whose mission in life seems to be to hang all day long out of her window and watch the doings in the little stone-flagged courts below her. In one of these an old man sometimes comes out, sits him down in a shady corner, and plays on the Italian bag-pipes, which are really more painful than any hand-organ that ever was made. After a while his wife opens hostilities with him from her window. I suppose she is reproaching him for an idle devotion to art, but I cannot follow the conversation, although it is quite loud enough on both sides. But the handsome Italian girl up at the window follows the changes of the strife with the light of the joy of battle in her beautiful dark eyes, and I can tell from her face exactly which of the old folk is getting the better of it.

But though the life of Jersey and Mulberry Streets may be mildly interesting to outside spectators who happen to have a fellow-feeling of vulgarity with the mob, the mob must find it rather monotonous. Jersey Street is not only a blind alley, but a dead one, so far as outside life is concerned, and Judge Phœnix and little sister see pretty much the same old two-and-sixpence every day. The bustle and clamor of Mulberry Bend are only a few blocks below them, but the Bend is an exclusive slum; and Police Headquarters—the Central Office—is a block above, but the Central Office deals only with the refinements of artistic crime, and is not half so interesting as an ordinary police-station. The priests go by from the school below, in their black robes and tall silk hats, always two by two, marching with brisk, business-like tread. An occasional drunken man or woman wavers along, but generally their faces and their conditions are both familiar. Sometimes two men hurry by, pressing side by side. If you have seen that peculiar walk before you know what it means. Two light steel rings link their wrists together. The old man idly watches them until they disappear in the white marble building on the next block. And then, of course, there is al-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ways a thin stream of working folk going to and fro upon their business.

In spring and in fall things brighten a little. Those are the seasons of processions and religious festivals. Almost every day then, and sometimes half a dozen times in a day, the Judge and the baby may see some Italian society parading through the street. Fourteen proud sons of Italy, clad in magnificent new uniforms, bearing aloft huge silk banners, strut magnificently in the rear of a German band of twenty-four pieces,

and a drum-corps of a dozen more. Then, too, come the religious processions, when the little girls are taken to their first communion. Six sturdy Italians struggle along under the weight of a mighty temple or pavilion, all made of colored candles—not the dainty little pink trifles with rosy shades of perforated paper, that light our old lady's dining-table—but the great big candles of the Romish Church (a church which, you may remember, is much affected of the mob, especially in times of suffering, sickness, or death); mighty candles, six and eight feet tall, and as thick as your wrist, of red and blue and green and yellow, arranged in artistic combinations around a statue of the Virgin. From this splendid structure silken ribbons stream in all directions, and at the end of each ribbon is a little girl—generally a pretty little girl—in a white dress bedecked with green bows. And each little girl leads by the hand one smaller than herself, sometimes a toddler so tiny that you marvel that it can walk at all. Some of the little ones are bare-headed, but most of them wear the square head-cloth of the Italian peasant, such as their mothers and grandmothers wore in Italy. At each side of the girls marches an escort of proud parents, very much mixed up with the boys of the families, who generally appear in their usual street dress, some of them showing through it in conspicuous places. And before and behind them are bands and drum-corps, and societies with banners, and it is all a blare of martial music and primary colors the whole length of the street.

But these are Mulberry Street's brief carnival seasons, and when their splendor is departed the block relapses into work-aday dulness, and the procession that marches and counter-marches before Judge Phœnix and little sister in any one of the long hours between eight and twelve and one and six is something like this:

Up.	Down.
Detective taking prisoner to Central Office.	
	Chinaman.
Messenger boy.	Two house-painters.
Two priests.	Boy with basket.
Jewish sweater, with coats on his shoulder.	Boy with tin beer-pails on a stick.
Carpenter.	
Another Chinaman.	
Drunken woman (a regular).	
Glass-put-in man.	
Washerwoman with clothes.	
Poor woman with market-basket.	
	Drunken man.
Undertaker's man carrying trestles.	
Butcher's boy.	
Two priests.	Detective coming back from Central Office alone.

Such is the daily march of the mob in Mulberry Street near the mouth of Jersey's blind alley, and such is its outrageous behavior as observed by a presumably decent person from the windows of the big red brick building across the way.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Suddenly there is an explosion of sound under the decent person's window, and a hand-organ starts off with a jerk like a freight train on a down grade,

that joggles a whole string of crashing notes. Then it gets down to work, and its harsh, high-pitched, metallic drone makes the street ring for a moment. Then it is temporarily drowned by a chorus of shrill, small voices. The person—I am afraid his decency begins to drop off him here—leans on his broad window-sill and looks out. The street is filled with children of every age, size, and nationality; dirty children, clean children, well-dressed children, and children in rags, and for every one of these last two classes put together a dozen children who are neatly and cleanly but humbly clad — the children of the self-respecting poor. I do not know where they have all swarmed from. There were only three or four in sight just before the organ came; now there are several dozen in the crowd, and the crowd is growing. See, the women are coming out in the rear tenements. Some male passers-by line up on the edge of the sidewalk and look on with a superior air. The Italian barber has come all the way up his steps, and is sitting on the rail. Judge Phœnix has teetered forward at least half a yard, and stands looking at the show over the heads of a little knot of women hooded with red plaid shawls. The epileptic boy comes out on his stoop and stays there at least three minutes before the area-way swallows him. Up above there is a head in almost every casement. Mamie is at her window, and the little mulatto child at hers. There are only two people who do not stop and look on and listen. One is a Chinaman, who stalks on with no expression at all on his blank face; the other is the boy from the printing-office with a dozen foaming cans of beer on his long stick. But he does not leave because he wants to. He lingers as long as he can, in his passage through the throng, and disappears in the printing-house doorway with his head screwed half way around on his shoulders. He would linger yet, but the big foreman would call him "Spitzbube!" and would cuff his ears.

The children are dancing. The organ is playing "On the Blue Alsatian Mountains," and the little heads are bobbing up and down to it in time as true as ever was kept. Watch the little things! They are really waltzing. There is a young one of four years old. See her little worn shoes take the step and keep it! Dodworth or DeGarmo could not have taught her better. I wonder if either of them ever had so young a pupil. And she is dancing with a girl twice her size. Look at that ring of children — all girls — waltzing round hand in hand! How is that for a ladies'

chain? Well, well, the heart grows young to see them. And now look over to the grocery. Big sister has come out and climbed on the vegetable-stand, and is sitting in the potatoes with little sister in her lap. Little sister waves her fat, red arms in the air and shrieks in babyish delight. The old women

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with the shawls over their heads are talking together, crooning over the spectacle in their Irish way:

"Thot's me Mary Ann, I was tellin' ye about, Mrs. Rafferty, dancin' wid the little one in the green apron."

"It's a foine sthring o' childher ye have, Mrs. Finn!" says Mrs. Rafferty, nodding her head as though it were balanced on wires. And so the dance goes on.

In the centre of it all stands the organ-grinder, swarthy and black-haired. He has a small, clear space so that he can move the one leg of his organ about, as he turns from side to side, gazing up at the windows of the brick building where the great wrought-iron griffins stare back at him from their lofty perches. His anxious black eyes rove from window to window. The poor he has always with him, but what will the folk who mould public opinion in great griffin-decorated buildings do for him?

I think we will throw him down a few nickels. Let us tear off a scrap of newspaper. Here is a bit from the society column of the *Evening* ——. That will do excellently well. We will screw the money up in that, and there it goes, *chink!* on the pavement below. There, look at that grin! Wasn't it cheap at the price?

I wish he might have had a monkey to come up and get the nickels. We shall never see the organ-grinder's monkey in the streets of New York again. I see him, though. He comes out and visits me where I live among the trees, whenever the weather is not too cold to permit him to travel with his master. Sometimes he comes in a bag, on chilly days; and my own babies, who seem to be born with the fellow-feeling of vulgarity with the mob, invite him in and show him how to warm his cold little black hands in front of the kitchen range.

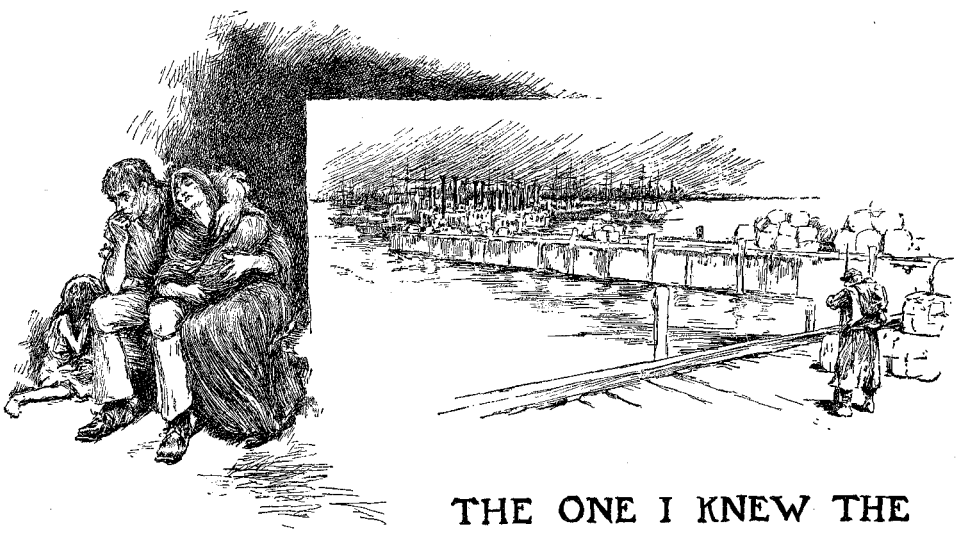
I do not suppose, even if it were possible to get our good old maiden lady to come down to Mulberry Street and sit at my window when the organ-grinder comes along, she could ever learn to look at the mob with friendly, or at least kindly, eyes; but I think she would learn—and she is cordially invited to come—that it is not a mob that rejoices in "outrageous behavior," as some other mobs that we read of have rejoiced—notably one that gave a great deal of trouble to some very "decent people" in Paris toward the end of the last century. And I think that she even might be induced to see that the organ-grinder is following an honest trade, pitiful as it be, and not exercising a "fearful beggary." He cannot be called a beggar who gives something that to him, and to thousands of others, is something valuable, in return for the money he asks of you. Our organ-grinder is no more a beggar than is my good friend Mr. Henry Abbey, the honestest and best of operatic impresarios. Mr. Abbey can take the American opera house and hire Mr. Seidl and Mr. —— to conduct grand opera for your delight and mine, and when we can afford it we go and listen to his perfect music, and, as our poor contributions cannot pay for it all, the rich of the land meet the deficit. But this poor, foot-sore child of fortune has only his heavy box of tunes and a human being's easement in the public highway. Let us not shut him out of that poor right because once in a while he wanders in front of our doors and offers wares that offend our finer taste. It is easy enough to get him to betake himself elsewhere, and, if it costs us a few cents, let us not ransack our law-books and our moral philosophies to find out if we cannot indict him for constructive blackmail, but consider the nickel or the dime a little

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tribute to the uncounted weary souls who love his strains and welcome his coming.

For the editor of the *Evening* —— was wrong when he said that the Board of Aldermen and the Mayor consented to the licensing of the organ-grinder "in the face of a popular protest." There was a protest, but it was not a popular protest, and it came face to face with a demand that *was* popular. And the Mayor and the Board of Aldermen did rightly, and did as should be done in this American land of ours, when they granted the demand of the majority of the people, and refused to heed the protest of a minority. For the people who said YEA on this question were as scores of thousands or hundreds of thousands to the thousands of people who said NAY; and the vexation of the few hangs light in the balance against even the poor scrap of joy which was spared to innumerable barren lives.

And so permit me to renew my invitation to the old lady.



THE ONE I KNEW THE BEST OF ALL

A MEMORY OF THE MIND OF A CHILD.

By Frances Hodgson Burnett.

THE ILLUSTRATIONS BY R. B. BIRCH.

CHAPTER XIII.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.

SHE told many stories "Continued in our Next," through many weeks, to the Listeners whose property she seemed to become. They had their established places near her. Kate's was the nearest, and, in fact, she was chief proprietress of the entertainment. She had been, as it were, the cause of Edith Somerville, who but for her would never have existed. My impression is that she arranged where the Listeners should sit, and that her influence was employed by outsiders who wanted to gain admission. She was an impetuous child, and did not like to lose time. If by some chance a Listener dropped out of the ranks for an afternoon, and, returning, asked anxiously:

"What did you tell yesterday? I didn't hear that part, you know;" Kate

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

would turn and give a hasty and somewhat impatient *résumé* of the chief events related.

"Oh, Malcolm came," she would say,

"They had their established places near her."

"and Violet had a white dress with bluebells at her belt, and he was jealous of Godfrey, and he got in a temper at Violet, and they quarrelled, and he went away forever, and she went in a boat on the lake, and a storm came up, and he hadn't quite gone away, and he was wandering round the lake, and he plunged in and saved her, and her golden hair was all wet and tangled with bluebells, and so—" turning to the Small Person—"and so—now go on!"

And then would proceed the recital describing the anguish and remorse of the late infuriate Malcolm as he knelt upon the grass by the side of the drenched white frock and golden hair and bluebells, embracing the small, limp, white hand, and imploring the violet eyes to open and gaze upon him once more.

They always did open. Penitent lovers were always forgiven, rash ones were reconciled, wickedness was always punished, offended relatives always relented—particularly rich uncles and fathers—opportune fortunes were left invariably at opportune moments. No Listener was ever harrowed too long or allowed to rust her crochet needle *entirely* with tears. As the Small Person was powerful, so she was merciful. As she was lavish with the golden hair, so she was generous with the rest. A tendency toward reckless liberality and soft relenting marked her for its prey even at this early hour. I have never been quite able to decide whether she was a very weak or a very determined creature—weak because she could not endure to see Covent Garden merely as the costermongers saw it—or determined, because she had the courage to persist in ignoring the flavor of the raw turnip and in bestowing on it a flavor of her own. After all, it is possible that to do this requires decision and fixedness of purpose. In life itself, agreeable situations are so often flavored by the raw turnip, and to close one's eyes steadily to the fact that it is not a sun-warmed peach, not infrequently calls upon one's steadiness of resource.

If she had been a sharp, executive, business-like sort of child, she might have used her juvenile power as a thing with a certain market value. She might have dictated terms, made conditions, and gained divers school-room advantages. But she had no capacities of the sort. She simply told the stories and the others listened. If there had been a Listener astute enough in a mercantile way to originate the plan of privately farming her out, it might easily have been managed without her knowledge. She had been a stupidly unsuspecting little person from her infancy, and she might always have been relied upon for the stories. But there was no Listener with these tendencies, that I am aware of.

There came a time when some windfall gave into her possession an exercise-book which was almost entirely unused. She wrote her first complete story in it. It had been her habit previously to merely write scenes from stories on the slate and in the butcher's books. Sir

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Marmaduke Maxwelton and his companions were never completed. But the one in the blank-book came to a conclusion. Its title was "Frank Ellsworth, or Bachelors' Buttons." There was nothing whatever in it which had any connection with buttons, but the hero was a bachelor. He was twenty-two, and had raven hair, and, rendered firm by the passage of years of vast experience, had decided that nothing earthly would induce him to unite himself in matrimony. The story opened with his repeating this to his housekeeper, who was the typical adoring family servant. The venerable lady naturally smiled and shook her head with playful sadness—and then the discriminating reader knew that in the next page would loom up the Edith Somerville of the occasion, whose large and lustrous azure eyes and veil of pale golden ringlets would shake even the resolution of his stern manhood, and that, after pages of abject weakness, he would fall at her feet in a condition which could only be described as drivelling. My impression is that the story contained no evidence whatever of intelligence. But it was not at intelligence that the Small Person was aiming. She was only telling a story. She was very simple about it. She added the sub-title, "or Bachelors' Buttons," because she was pleased to see something in it vaguely figurative, and she liked the sound.

"This story she read to Mamma."

This story she read to Mamma, who said it was "a very pretty tale," and seemed somehow a little amused. Perhaps, after all, Mamma was clever. She never discouraged or made the Small Person feel her efforts silly and pretentious, but her gentle praise gave no undue importance to them, and somehow seemed to make them quite natural and innocent child developments. They were not things to be vain about, only things to enjoy in one's own very young way.

The Small Person obtained other blank-books and began other stories, but none were ever finished. It always happened that a new one insisted on being begun and pushed the first aside. A very long one—the pride of her heart—called "Céleste, or Fortune's Wheel," was the guiding star of her twelfth year, but it was not concluded, and was thrown into the fire with all the rest when she left her own land for a new one.

The unfinished stories rather troubled

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

her. When the infant regret that she was not a suitable subject for Sunday-school Memoirs had melted into a vague young desire not to have many faults, she used to wonder if the fact that so many stories were begun and not finished, was a sign of an undesirable mental quality.

"I ought to *finish* them," she used to think, remorsefully. "I ought not to begin things I don't finish." And she reproached herself quite severely.

"Shall I go on like this, and *never* finish one," she thought, and she was vaguely distressed by a shadowing feeling that it might be her *sort* to be always beginning, and never finishing.

Inspired by her example, several of the Listeners began to write stories in old blank-books.

They were all echoes of Edith Somerville, and when they were given to her to read, she sternly repressed in herself any occasional criticism which arose in her small mind. She was afraid that criticism on her part, even though only mental, was a sign of what was generally spoken of as "a bad disposition." She was, in private, extremely desirous not to have "a bad disposition."

"I am conceited," she said to herself. "That is the reason I don't think their stories are as nice as mine. It is vulgar and ridiculous to be conceited, besides being bad."

There was one Listener who described her hero, at an interesting juncture, as "holding out his tiny lily hand," and something within her was vaguely revolted by a sense of the grotesque, but she could not have been induced to comment upon the circumstance.

It might, in these days, be interesting to examine these manuscripts—if they still existed—with a view to discovering if they contained any germ of a reason why one child should have continued to write stories throughout life, while the rest did not write again. The romances of the Small Person were wildly romantic and preposterously sentimental, without a doubt. That there was always before her mind's eye a distinct and strongly colored picture of her events, I remember; the Listeners laughed and occasionally cried, and were always rapt in their attention; but if regarded with the impartial eye of cold criticism, my impression is that they might be dismissed as arrant nonsense. The Story ran riot through their pages, unbitted and unbridled.

But no one ever saw them but herself. Even Mamma heard only the reading of "Frank Ellsworth." The rest, scribbled in copy-books and blank-books, accumulated in darkness and privacy, until the first great event of her life occurred.

It was a very great event, and I am convinced, changed the whole color of existence for her. It was no less a matter than leaving England, to begin a new life in America.

The events which preceded, and were the final reasons for it, were not pleasant ones. She was too young to be told all the details of them. But the beginning of it all was a sort of huge Story, which seized upon her imagination. It seemed to her that, for years and years, everyone seemed to live, more or less, under the shadow of a cloud spoken of as "the War in America." This was probably felt more in the cotton manufacturing centres than anywhere else. Lancashire was the great county of cotton factories. Manchester was the very High Altar of the God Cotton. There were rich men in Manchester who were known everywhere as Cotton Lords. The smoke rolling from the tall Babel Towers which were the chimneys of their factories, made the sky dingy for scores of miles around, the back streets were inhabited by the men and women who worked at their looms, the swarms of smoke-begrimed children who played everywhere, began to work in the factories as early as the law allowed. All the human framework of the great dirty city was built about the cotton trade. All the working classes depended upon it for bread, all the middle classes for employment, all the rich for luxury. The very poor being wakened at four in the morning by the factory bells, flocked to the buildings over which the huge chimneys towered and rolled their volume of black smoke; the respectable fathers of families spent their days in the counting-rooms or different departments of the big warehouses; the men of wealth lived

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

their lives among cotton, buying and selling, speculating and gaining, or losing in Cotton, Cotton, Cotton.

"If the war in America does not end," it began to be said at one time, "there will be no more cotton, and the manufacturers will not know what to do."

But this was at first, when everyone believed that the difficulty would settle itself in a few months, and the North and South would be united again. No one was pessimist enough to believe that such a terrible thing would happen as that the fighting would continue.

But after a while other things were said.

"There is beginning to be a scarcity of cotton. People even say that some of the factories may have to stop work."

"Sometimes the Small Person found her at her dressing-table."

Every closed factory meant hunger to scores of operatives — even hundreds. But still the war went on in America.

"Jackson's factory has stopped work because there is no cotton!" came a little later.

Then:

"Bright's has stopped work! All the operatives thrown out of employment. Jones is going to stop, and Perkins can only keep on about two weeks longer. They are among the biggest, and there will be hundreds on the street. Brownson's ruined. Had no cotton to fill his engagements. All these enormously rich fellows will feel it awfully, but the ones who are only in moderate circumstances will go to smash!"

It was oftenest the Boys who brought these reports. And still the war went on in America, and the Small Person heard rumors of battles, of victories and losses, of killed and wounded, of the besieging of cities with strange-sounding names, of the South overwhelmed by armies, of plantations pillaged, magnolia-embowered houses ransacked and burned. At least when she heard of Southern houses being destroyed, she herself at once supplied the magnolias. To her the South was the land of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." A plantation meant a boundless estate, swarming with negroes like Uncle Tom, Aunt Chloe, Eliza, and the rest of them, and governed either by a Legree or a St. Claire, who lived on a veranda covered with luxuriant vines and shaded by magnolia-groves, where Eva flitted about in a white frock and long, golden-brown ringlets.

She did not in the least know what the war was about, but she could not help sympathizing with the South because magnolias grew there, and people dressed in white sat on verandas covered with vines. Also, there were so many roses. How could one help loving a place where there were so many roses? When she realized that the freedom from slavery of the Uncle Toms and Aunt Chloes and Elizas was involved, she felt the situation a strained one. It was impossible not to wish the poor slaves to be freed—the story itself demanded it. One wept all through "Uncle Tom's Cabin" because they had not their "freedom," and were sold away from their wives and children, and beaten and hunted with bloodhounds; but the swarms of them singing and speaking negro dialect in the plantations were such a picturesque and lovable feature of the Story; and it was so unbearable to think of the plantations be-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing destroyed, the vine-covered verandas disappearing, and the magnolias blooming no more to shade the beautiful planters in Panama hats and snow-white linen. She was so attached to

"The first bales of cotton."

planters, and believed them all—except the Legrees—to be graceful and picturesque creatures.

But it seemed that the war prevented their sitting on their verandas sipping iced juleps through straws, while their plantations brought forth cotton.

Factory after factory closed, thousands of operatives were out of work, there was a Cotton Famine. The rich people were being ruined, the poor were starving, there was no trade. The warehouses began to feel it, the large shops and the small ones, more or less directly; all Manchester prosperity depended upon Cotton, and as there was no Cotton there was no money.

"If the war in America were only over," everybody said.

The stories of the starving operatives became as terrible as the stories from America. Side by side with accounts of battles there were, in the newspapers, accounts of the "Lancashire Distress," as it was called. Funds were raised by kind-hearted people in all sorts of places to give aid to the suffering creatures. There were Soup Kitchens established, and pitiful tales were told of the hundreds of hollow-eyed, ravenous men and women and children who crowded about their doors.

"If t' war i' 'Merica ud coom to an eend," they said among themselves, "we shouldna aw be clemmin."

And it was not only the operatives who suffered, all classes were involved as the months went on.

Little girls and boys began to say to each other:

"We can't go to Wales this summer. Papa says he can't afford it. There are so many of us and it takes such a lot of money. It's the war in America that makes him feel poor."

Or,

"The Blakes are not going to have a Christmas party. Mr. Blake has lost money through the war in America."

Or more awe-inspiring still:

"Do you know, Mr. Heywood is a bankrupt. The war in America has ruined his business, and he has to close his warehouse."

Even Mamma began to look harassed and anxious. She had neither a factory nor a warehouse, but she also had her difficulties and losses. Poor gentle and guileless little lady, she was all unfit to contend with a harsh, sharp, sordid world. She had tried to be business-like and practical, because poor Papa being gone, there were the three little girls to be taken care of and the boys to be given a career in life. Sometimes the Small Person found her at her dressing-table taking off her little black bonnet with gentle trembling hands and with tears in the blue eyes "Poor Papa" had thought like Amy Robsart's and Jeanie Deans's.

"Is anything the matter, Mamma?" she would ask.

"Yes, dear," Mamma would answer, tremblingly. "I have a great deal to be anxious about. I am afraid I am not a very good business woman, and so

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

many things go wrong. If I only had poor Papa to advise me—;" and the soft deprecating voice would break.

"Don't, don't be low-spirited, Mamma," the Small Person would say, with a tremor in her own voice. "It will all come right after a while."

"Oh, my dear," Mamma would exclaim, at once tried and worn out, "nothing will *ever* come right until this dreadful war is over in America."

If this were a record of incidents, many might be recorded of this time. But it is only a record of the principal events which influenced the mental life of a Small Person.

There came at last a time when the war was ended, and there was a pathetic story of the first bales of cotton being met by a crowd of hunger- and trouble-worn factory operatives with sobs and tears, and cries of rapturous welcome—and of one man—perhaps a father who had sat by a fireless hearth, broken of spirit and helpless, while his young swarm cried for bread—a poor gaunt fellow who, lifting his hat with tears running down his cheeks, raised his voice in the Doxology, one after another joining in, until the whole mass sang, in one great swelling chorus:

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye Heavenly Host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

The Small Person heard this story with a large lump in her throat. She felt that it meant so much, and that there must have been strange, sorrowful things going on in the cottages in the Back Streets.

It was after she had heard it that the great event occurred. She entered a room one morning to find Mamma and the two boys evidently discussing with unusual excitement a letter with a foreign post-mark.

"It seems so sudden!" said Mamma, in rather an agitated voice.

"It would be a great lark," said one of the boys. "I should like it!"

"I don't think I could ever make up my mind to leave England!" fluttered Mamma. "It seems such a long way!"

The Small Person looked from one to the other.

"What is a long way?" she asked. "What are you talking about, Mamma?"

Mamma looked at her, and her gentle face wore an almost frightened little expression.

"America!" she said, "America!"

"America!" exclaimed the Small Person, with wide-opened eyes. "What about America?"

"We're going there," cried her younger brother, who was given to teasing her. "The whole job lot of us! I say, isn't it a lark!"

"My dear, don't talk so thoughtlessly!" said Mamma. "I have had a letter from your Uncle John, in America. He thinks it would be a good thing for us to go there. He believes he could find openings for the boys."

"What about America?" "We're going there," cried her younger brother.

"Oh!" gasped the Small Person. "America! Do you—do you think you will go? Oh, Mamma," with sudden rapture—"*do—do!*"

It seemed so incredibly delightful! To go to America! The land of Uncle Tom's Cabin! Perhaps to see plantations and magnolias! To be attended by Aunt Chloes and Topsys! To make a long voyage—to cross a real Atlantic

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Ocean—in a ship which was not the Green Arm-Chair!

The real events of her life had been so simple and its boundaries had been so limited. From the Back Garden of Eden to the Square, and from the Square to the nearest mild sea-side town, which seemed to be made up of a Pier, bathing-machines, lodgings, and shrimps for tea, these were her wildest wanderings. The inhabitants of the Square were not given to travel. The Best Friend had spent a summer in Scotland, and the result of searching cross-examination as to her sojourn in this foreign land had seemed to give the whole flavor of Sir Walter Scott. She had sat by a "loch," and she had heard people speak Gaelic, which she had found an obstacle to fluent interchange of opinion. The Small Person had once seen a very little girl who was said to have come from America.

"The Small Person looked upon her with deference and yearning."

She had longed to talk to her and find out what it was like to live in America—what America was like, what it was like to cross the Atlantic Ocean. Her craving was to find out all about America—to have it summed up as it were with definite clearness. But the very little girl was only five years old, and she was not an intelligent little girl, and did not seem to regard herself as a foreign product, or to know that America was foreign and so intensely interesting. But the Small Person looked upon her with deference and yearning, and watched her from afar, being rather surprised that she did not seem to know how almost weirdly fascinating she was.

And now to think that there was a possibility—even a remote one—that she might go to America herself!

"Oh, Mamma, please do, please *do!*" she said again and again, in the days that followed.

The Boys regarded the prospect with rapture. To them it meant wild adventure of every description. They were so exhilarated that they could talk of nothing else, and began to bear about them a slight suggestion of being of the world of the heroes of Captain Mayne Reid and Fenimore Cooper. They frequently referred to the "Deerslayer" and the "Last of the Mohicans," and brought in interesting details gathered from "a fellow I know, who comes from New York." Certain descriptions of a magnificent thoroughfare known as Broadway impressed the Small Person immensely. She thought that Broadway was at least half a mile wide, and that before the buildings adorning it Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle must sink into utter insignificance—particularly a place called A. T. Stewart's. These opinions were founded upon the statements of the "fellow who came from New York."

It really was a delightfully exciting time. The half-awed rapture of hearing the possible prospect talked over by Mamma and the Uncles and Aunts, the revelation one felt one was making in saying to an ordinary boy or girl, "Do you know that *perhaps* we are going to America!" There was thrill enough for a lifetime in it.

And when at last Mamma "and the Aunts and Uncles and all the relations and friends" had decided the matter, and everybody went to bed knowing that they *were* going to America, and that everything was to be sold and that the Atlantic *was* to be crossed, a new world seemed to be looming up, and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Small Person in the midst of her excitement had some rather queer little feelings and lay awake staring in the darkness and wondered who would get the Green Arm-Chair and the Nursery Sofa.

And then came greater excitement still. There seemed such thousands of things to be done and such a sense of intoxicating novelty in the air. Everybody was so affectionate and kind, and staying with a family of cousins while the house was disposed of seemed the most delightful rollicking thing. Two families in one house filled it to overflowing and produced the most hilarious results. There was laughing nearly all night, and darting in and out on errands and visits all day, there was a buying of things, and disposing of things, the seeing friends, the bidding good-by, and somehow through it all that delicious sense of adventure and expectation and wild, young, good spirits and fun.

And this all reached a climax in an excited, entrancing journey to Liverpool, with two railroad carriages full of cousins, with an aunt or so in attendance. Then there was a night in Liverpool, in which it was almost impossible to sleep at all because there was so much to be talked over in bed, and the next morning was so thrillingly near and at the same time so unbearably far away.

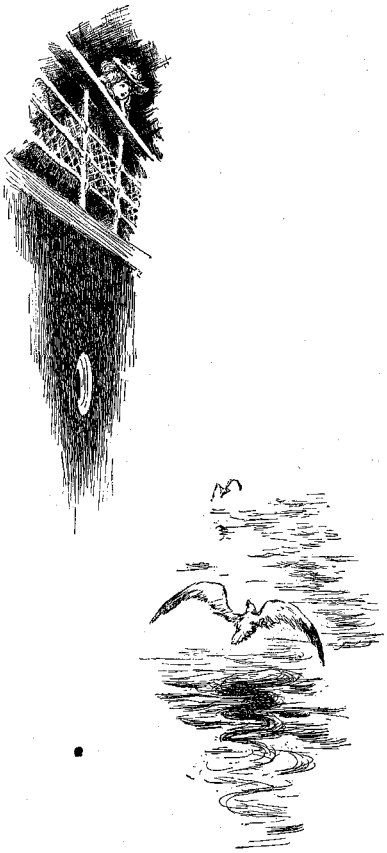
"He kissed her hot cheek affectionately."

And when it came at last there came with it the sending away to the ship of cases and trunks, the bundling into cabs of all the cousins, with final packages of oranges and lemons and all sorts of remedies and resources, the tremulously delightful crowding on the wharf, the sight of the great ship, the nervous ecstasy of swarming upon it, exploring, exclaiming, discovering, glancing over the groups of fellow-passengers and singling out those who looked interesting. And then, while the excitement was at the highest, there came the ringing of the fateful bell, and the Small Person felt her heart give a curious wild thump and strange electric thrills run down into her fingers.

Suddenly she felt as if too much was happening all at once—as if things were woful. She wanted to go to America—yes, but everybody seemed to have his eyes filled with tears, people were clinging to each other's hands, shaking hands fiercely, clasped in each other's arms, the people in the groups about her were all agitated, Mamma was being embraced by the aunts, with tears, the cousins made farewell clutches, their eyes suddenly full of tears.

"Good-by, good-by!" everyone was

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



saying "Good-by. I hope you'll be happy! Oh! it's so strange to see you go! We shall so miss you!" The Small Person kissed and was kissed with desperate farewell fervor. People had not then begun to make summer voyages from America to England every year. Going to America was going to another world—a world which seemed divided from quiet simple English homes almost by the gulf of Eternity.

"Oh! Good-by, good-by," she cried, quite passionately. "I wish you were *all* going with us!"

A friend of an older cousin was of the party. He was a nice fellow she had known from childhood. Because he was nice enough to be trusted, she had given him her little dog, not knowing she might have taken it with her.

He was the last to shake hands with her. He looked rather nervous and deeply moved. "Good-by," he said "I hope you will like America."

"Good-by," she said, looking at him through tears. "You—I know you'll be good to Flora."

"Yes," he answered, "I'll be good to Flora."

And after looking at her a second he seemed to decide that she was still sufficiently a little girl to be kissed, and he kissed her wet cheek affectionately and walked away with an evident effort to maintain a decided air. And when the ship began to move slowly away he stood with the aunts and cousins on the wharf, and they all waved their handkerchiefs, and the Small Person leaned upon the deck-rail, with tears running down her cheeks, and said to herself, under her breath,

"Oh, dear! oh, dear! *Now* I'm going to America."

(To be continued.)

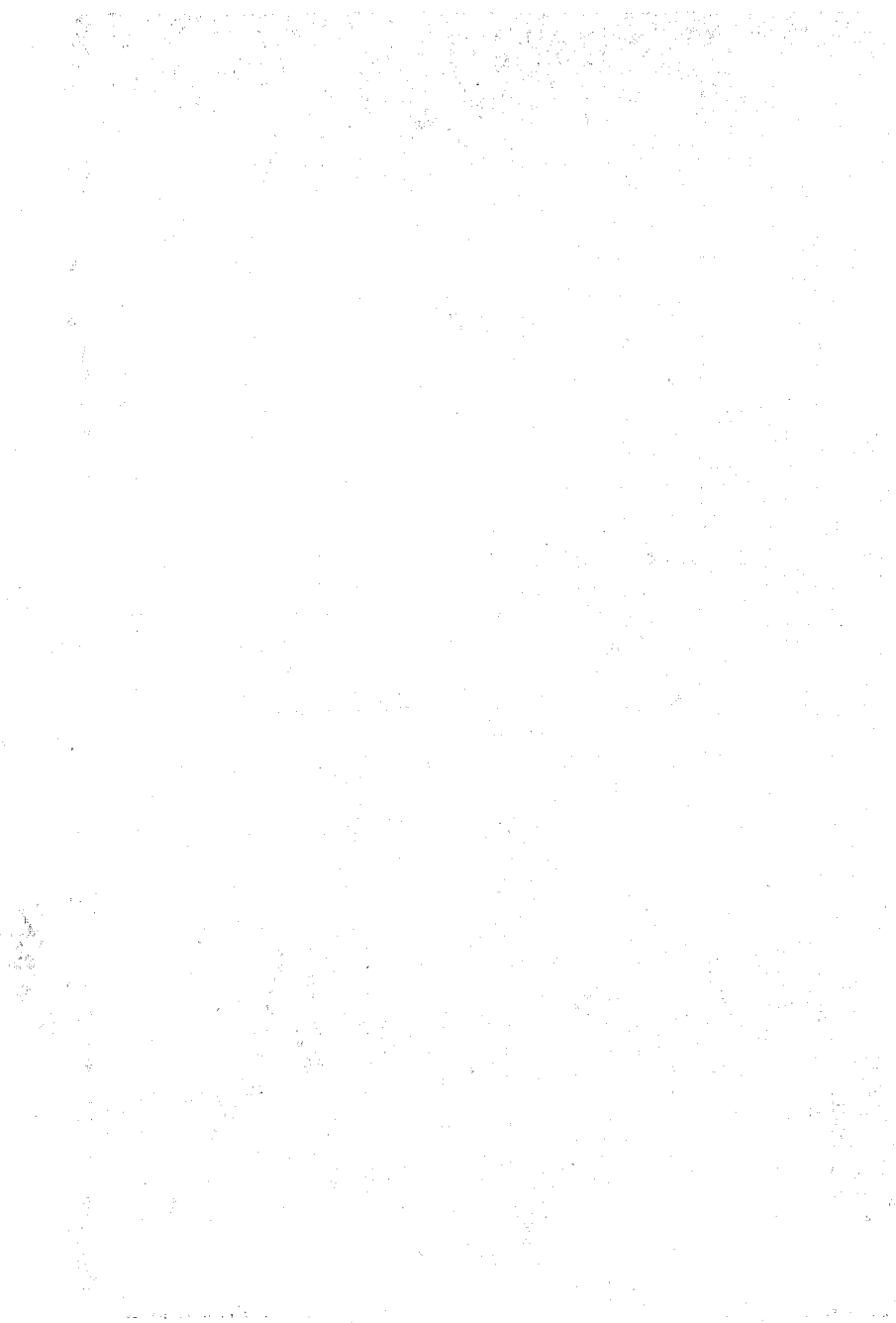
PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DRAWN BY E. H. BLASHFIELD ENGRAVED BY H. W. PECKWELL

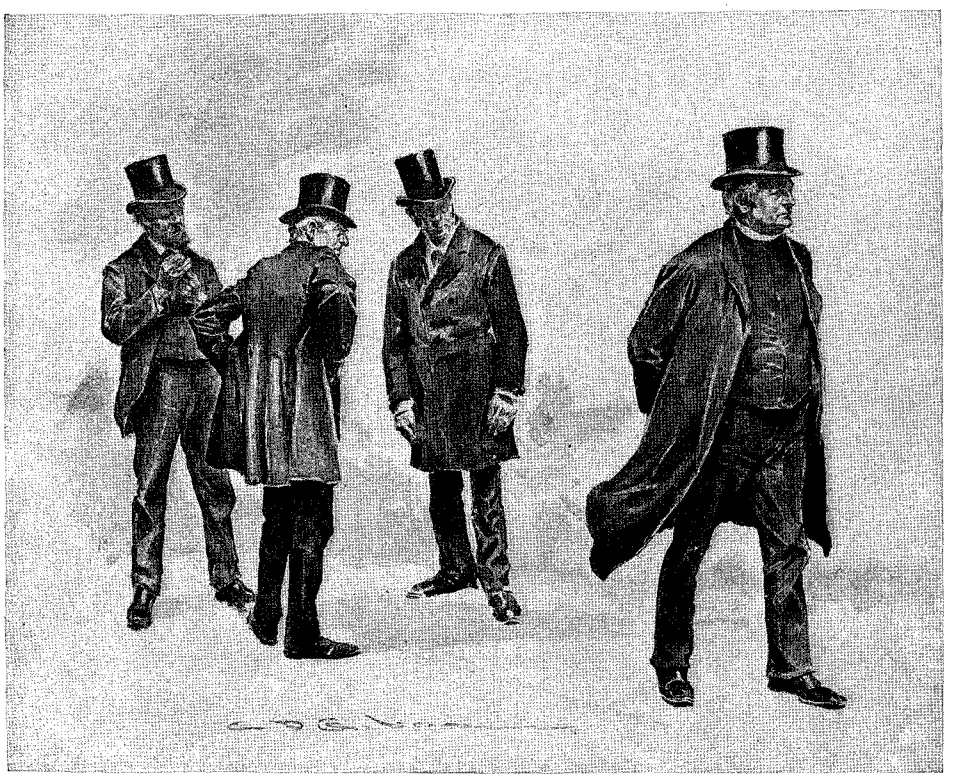
FLORENTINE GIRLS

[*Contributed by the artist to the Exhibition Number of Scribner's Magazine.*]

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



"And Father Ryan went past them down the street."—Page 662.

BETWEEN MASS AND VESPERS.

By Sarah Orne Jewett.

THE ILLUSTRATIONS BY C. D. GIBSON.

MASS was over; the noonday sun was so bright at the church-door that, instead of waiting there in a sober expectant group, three middle-aged men of the parish went a few steps westward to stand in the shade of a great maple-tree. There they stood watching the people go by—the small boys and the chattering girls. Now and then one of the older men or women said a few words in Irish to Dennis Call or John Mulligan by way of friendly salutation. They were a contented, pleasant-looking flock, these parishioners of St. Anne's; they might have lost the gayety that they would have kept in the old country, but a look of good cheer had not forsaken them, though many a figure showed the thinness that comes from steady, hard work, and almost every face had the deep lines that are worn only by anxiety. The pretty girls looked as their mothers had looked before them, only they were not so fair and fresh-colored, having been brought up less wholesomely and too much indoors.

"That's a nice gerrl o' Mary Finnerty's," said Dennis Call, gravely, to his mates, following the charming young creature with approving eyes.

"'Deed, then, you're right, Dinny," agreed little Pat Finn, a queer old fig-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ure of a shoemaker, who was bent nearly double between the effects of his stooping trade and a natural warp in his bones. "There don't be so pritty a little gerrl as Katy Finnerty walk into church, so there don't! I like her meself; she's got the cut o' the gerrls in Tralee—the prittiest gerrls is in it that's in the whole of Ireland."

"Coom now, then! you do always be bragging for Tralee; there's enough other places as good as it," scoffed Dennis. "Anybody that ain't a Bantry man can tark as they like, they'll have to put up wid second-best whin all's said an' done."

"Whisht now!" said John Mulligan, putting his hand to his forehead and bobbing his head respectfully at Father Ryan, the old priest, who had just come hurrying from the vestry-door along a precarious footway of single boards left there since the days of spring mud.

"I hope you're feeling fine the day, sir?" said little Pat Finn, looking up with friendliness and pride at the tall old man. "We're getting good weather now, thank God, sir."

"We are that, Patrick Finn. God bless you, boys!" And Father Ryan went past them down the street to his house, while they all watched him without speaking until he had turned in at the gate with a flutter of his long coat-tails in the spring wind.

"Faix I wisht we all had the sharp teeth for our dinners that his riverence has now," laughed Dennis. "I'll be bound he's keen for it, honest man. 'Twas to early mass over to White Mills he was, lavin' by break o' day, an' just comin' back an' they sent to him for poor Mary Sullivan that's to be waked this night, God rest her; and he not home from the corp' house an' Mary just dead, but two women come screechin' for him to hurry, there was a shild to be christened waitin' in the church; 'twas one o' Jerry Hannan's wife's, that wint into black fits an' it being two hours born. Then it was high mass he had. I saw him myself puttin' a hand to his head an' humpin' wid his shoulders, an' he before the alther. 'Tis a great dale o' worruk, so it is, for a man the age o' Father Ryan, may God help him!"

"I'd think the Bishop 'ould give him some aid now. They could sind some young missioner for a while to White Mills. 'Tis out of our own rights we do be, an' he to White Mills, day an' night wit' them French, an' one of us took hurt or dyin'. 'Tis too far to White Mills intirely," protested John Mulligan.

"Well, b'ys, the road's clear for us now, an' I'll say that I've got the match to Father Ryan's hunger in me own inside, 'tis thrue for me. Coom, Pat, now, there's no more gerrls! Get a move on you now, John, the fince is tired from ye!" And being thus suitably urged Dennis's companions started on their way. Dennis himself was a sturdy, middle-aged man, a teamster for the manufacturing company that had long ago gathered these Irish people into the staid and prosperous New England village. They had made a neighborhood by themselves, and were just now alarmed in their turn and disturbed by the presence of a few French Canadians, so thoroughly did they feel at home and believe in their rights to an adopted country. They meant to stay at any rate, and jealously suspected their lively neighbors of only a temporary appropriation of citizenship that would take more than it gave. Dennis Call would have been a prosperous man and good citizen anywhere, with his soberness and thrift and decent notions; he was much respected by his fellow-townsfolk.

"Coom, now!" exclaimed Pat Finn, trying to keep step with his tall companions, "'Leg over leg, as the dog wint to Dover,'" he added, cheerfully. "I might have been coaxing a ride home wid Braley's folks, they had the one sate saved in the wagon, but I was idlin' me time away wit' the likes of you; a taste of tark is always the ruin of me."

"Good-day to ye, Pat," the others called after him as he crossed over to go down a side-street; but the droll, stooping figure did not turn again, and Mulligan and Dennis went on in the peaceful company. Dennis was a step ahead of his friend. You rarely see the old-fashioned Irish folk walk side by side, perhaps they keep a dim remem-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DRAWN BY C. D. GIBSON.

"The guest felt that he could hold his own again."—Page 667.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

brance of footpaths over the open fields and moors. There is less of the formal, military sense than belongs to most Europeans, and a constant suggestion of the flock rather than the platoon.

At this moment two women who had lingered in the church overtook our friends and gave them a cordial greeting. One was the niece of Dennis Call and almost as old as he. They lived at opposite ends of the town, and she stopped to ask him some questions about his family, while the other two, after hesitating a moment, went their way together. Sunday is the great social occasion for women who are hardly out of their houses all the rest of the week, and Dennis eagerly besought the favor of a visit. "Run home wit me now for a bite of dinner," he urged. "'Twill be pot-luck, but the folks'll give you a grand welcome, and some of the children will be coming to vespers."

"Yirra now, I can't then, Dinny," the niece insisted, but her face shone with gratification and they both knew that she was ready to accept.

"Oh, be friendly now an' come an' see the folks," Dennis continued. "The poor woman was in all the week wit' a bad wakeness that troubles her very bad, 'tis the stomach-bone falls down they all says, but the docther has it that she's only wantin' a bit of strength wit' the spring weather an' all. 'Tis a dale o'work she has all the time, but the little gerrls begins to help iligant now an' 'twill soon be aisy; they grow very fast. Little Mag is gettin' a foine dinner the day. Coom, Mary!"

Mary gave a sigh of compassion for the hard-worked mother, whose tiredness she well comprehended. "You're lucky then, Dinnis, and herself is lucky, the two of you bein' together and you gettin' steady work the year through. I know well herself gets a bit of the pain in her, we all gets it, faix! I know well what it is. 'Tis our folks has hard times, wid my man dead this sivin years gone an' the old 'oman always in her bed, an' I havin' to tind poor Johnny an' herself like two babies. Wisha, wisha! I wasn't to mass—to-day is four Sundays gone since I heard mass before. Well now, see! I'm goin' wid you like a little lost dog. I'm glad of a treat—but I'll help little Mag wid the dinner, so I will, 'tis a task for the shild."

A lovely readiness to help shone in Mary O'Donnell's homely face. She looked poor and anxious, her bonnet, with its brown and white plaided ribbon and ancient shape, looked as if it might have been ten years in wear. She had worn her poor mourning threadbare and returned to this headgear of an earlier and more prosperous time. She had been full of hope and cheerfulness when she bought the queer old brown bonnet, but a blessed light of hope and kindliness still shone in her eyes.

As they went along, busy with their homely talk, someone lifted a window near them and called "Dennis, Dennis!" in a tone of mild authority.

"'Tis his riverence wants you!" exclaimed Mrs. O'Donnell, flushing with excitement and pleasure. "I'll be going on slow; do you take your time. Run now, Dinny!"

"I'll be there, sir," said Dennis, already inside the gate, and by the time he reached the steps, Father Ryan opened the door. "Step in," he said, "I must have a word with you. Who's that with you?"

"Mary O'Donnell, she that's brother's-daughter to me, sir; 'tain't often we gets the bit of tark. She's goin' home to dinner with the folks, herself's at home the day, sir, she's not well."

"I'll s'op an' see her one day soon. I missed her at mass. Your wife's a good woman, Dennis."

"An' Mary O'Donnell, too, has done fine—she was afther bein' left very poor, 'tis yourself knows it well, an' has been very kind, sir. She had but the two hands of her for depindence, but we all did what we could." Dennis had blushed at the priest's good words about his wife as if he himself had been praised. "I thank God I'm prospered wit' good health, sir."

The old priest stood still in the narrow entry looking at Dennis Call as if he were not listening and were lost in his own thoughts. Dennis stood with hat in hand, the moment was strangely embarrassing. Father Ryan's strong-featured, good-humored face looked drawn and bluish as if he were really suffering

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ENGRAVED FROM NATURE BY ELBRIDGE KINGSLEY

A QUIET SPOT

[*Contributed by the artist to the Exhibition Number of Scribner's Magazine.*]

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

from hunger and fatigue and some unforeseen perplexity beside. There was a cheerful insistent clatter of plates in the little dining-room beyond, and a comforting odor of roast-beef. Dennis felt more puzzled every moment, but he unconsciously smacked his lips in spite of uncertainties as to what the priest wanted.

"My heart's sick, Dennis," said his reverence, and a sudden flicker of light shone in his eyes.

Dennis shifted his weight to the other foot and passed his hat from right hand to left. "What's the matter, then, sir?" he asked, anxiously; "Did anybody break the church window again I do' know?" He felt a little impatient, Mary O'Donnell would be far down the street and the priest's good dinner made a man unbearably hungry. Still Father Ryan was frowning and planning without saying a word, and it made an honest man feel like a thief.

"Dennis, will you take a bit of dinner with me now and run afterward to Fletcher's place and get the best horse that's in, all in fifteen minutes' time? And say we're going on an errand of mercy if anybody puts a question. They'll think it's for the sick while it's for the well, God save us," said the old man.

"I'll do that, sir," said Dennis.

"Let's to dinner then," said Father Ryan. "I suppose good Mary O'Donnell's out of sound of your voice."

Dennis opened the door hastily, it was a relief to do something, and gave a loud call to Mary, who was still loitering not so very far away. "I'll not be home to my dinner," said he. "Do you go on then and tell the folks." So Mary, in happy amaze, went her ways to carry the pleasing news that Dennis was kept to his dinner with the priest.

Father Ryan was already in the dining-room; the roast-beef was smoking on the table, there were onions and potatoes, and even cranberry-sauce from some secret repository of the housekeeper, who was not unmindful of the priest's long morning of hard service. Mrs. Dillon was setting another plate opposite Father Ryan's own. Dennis forgot that he was clinging to his Sunday hat, but when they had blessed themselves, and dinner was fairly begun, and the hat pushed under the table, the guest felt that he could hold his own again, and ventured a sociable remark. Dennis was as quick as he could be, but the priest finished his beef first, and impatiently waved back a noble Sunday pudding which Mrs. Dillon was proudly bringing in at the door. "Run for the mare now, if you've had enough," said he, and Dennis gave a lingering glance at the pudding and departed.

"Lord be good to us, but he's in the hurry!" he grumbled, as he went at a jog trot down the street. It was not yet one o'clock and a lovely May afternoon. The season was early, and the maples in full leaf; the prospect of a drive out into the country, with a light buggy, and possibly Fletcher's best mare, delighted Dennis Call as if he were a school-boy. He marched into the stable-yard with most important manners, and said, in the hearing of a group of stay-at-home loungers, that Father Ryan called for the best team and was in great haste.

"What's up, Dennis, a christening?" inquired an amiable idler; but Dennis plunged his hands deep into his pockets and calmly turned away, and looked up at the blue sky with an air of assurance, exactly as if he were not wishing that he knew, himself. Presently he stepped into the light carriage with the air of a lord, and whirled out of the yard.

"Which way now, sir?" he asked the priest, who was already waiting at his gate, but Father Ryan took the reins himself. "I'm afraid you might go too slow for me," he said, trying to give Dennis a droll, reassuring look, but he could not hide the provocation, and even grief, that he evidently felt. "I don't forget that you are used to heavy teaming," he added, and they both laughed and felt much more at ease. "I must be back in time for vespers," said his reverence, as they passed the church.

The sorrel mare sped along the road; her master had kept her in for his own use later that afternoon, and she was only too fresh and ready. For a while they followed the main road toward the next large town, and passed many of their

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

acquaintances, driving or on foot, and Dennis was not without pride at being seen in the priest's company; but suddenly they turned into a rough, seldom-travelled by-way, that led up among the hills. It seemed as if the errand were to some person in trouble, but presently they had left behind what appeared to be the last house. This was a strange path to follow, and for what reason had Father Ryan desired a companion, unless it were necessary in such a steep and almost dangerous ascent? Once, years before, Dennis had climbed by this deserted road, up to the woodlands of the higher hills; he had been gunning with some young men, and he remembered the small, lonely farms that they had just passed, and how poor and inhospitable they looked in the winter weather; in fact, his remembrance of the holiday was not bright in any way, because he had gained but a poor day's sport. None of the priest's flock lived in this direction, that was one sure thing.

The road seemed to grow steeper and steeper, the sorrel mare stopped once or twice, discouraged, and looked ahead at the hard climb. There were dark hemlocks and pines on either side, illuminated here and there by the vivid green of young birch saplings that stood where they caught the sunlight. The air was fresh and sweet, there were busy birds fluttering and calling, the light tread of the mare seemed to disturb the secluded region, as if nothing had passed that way since the coming of the year.

Father Ryan had not spoken for a long time, all the cheerfulness had faded from his face. "Dennis!" said he, suddenly, so that the man at his side turned, startled and open-eyed to look at him. "Dennis, you remember that smart young Dan Nolan, Tom Nolan's boy, the one that went to the seminary for a while, but left and went West to be a railroad man?"

"I does mind Danny Nolan, sir; they say he's got rich. Him an' John Finnerty's gerrl is courtin' this long time, the pritty gerrl Katy; I saw her coming out from mass the day. John Finnerty do be thinking she's got a great match, the b'y always says in his letters that he's doing fine."

"May God forgive him!" said the priest, under his breath.

"Why, in course I'd know him well, sir," Dennis continued, eagerly, in his most communicative manner. "Wasn't he brought up next house to my own by the mill yard, until I moved to the better one I'm in now, thanks be to God, the other one being dacint to look at, but very damp an' the cause of much sickness to everyone. Oh, but the fine letters the b'y does be writing home, they brings them and reads them to herself an' me; truth is Tom Nolan's put his money into a mine that Danny's knowing to, out where he is, and they've been at me wouldn't I come wid 'em. Everyone says there do be a power o'money in it. The tark is all right, but for Tom not having got any papers; I'd like to see the papers they gives, first; an' I think meself, sir, it's the same with Tom, but he won't let on."

"My God!" said the old priest again.

"An' John Finnerty, the little gerrl's fadther, he sint t'ree hundred—'twas all he had laid by—you know the wife's a great spinder—an' Danny Nolan wrote back he'd find it t'ree thousand this time next year, an' herself has been in the street goin' to the shops ivery night since then, as rich-feeling as a conthractor! Katy, the young thing, sint him out her small savings she got in the mill that she was keeping to buy her wedding with. I was against that when they tould me, but she'd sint to Dan and he wrote a great letter to sind it along, an' he'd put it where it would grow. 'Too many eggs in the one basket,' says I. She's awful proud of Dan, and he do be always writin' the beautiful letters, sir; but he does be knowing his fadther works hard all the time, and at Christmas last year divil a cint came home to any one of them. They all says it was too far entirely to be gettin' prisents, but they'd like to be showing anything they got the lingth of the town. Tell me now, sir, do ye know of anything wrong? I do be thinkin' you've heard bad news. I couldn't tell why——"

Father Ryan touched the horse and gave a queer groan before he spoke.

"The truth is that Dan Nolan's a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DRAWN BY W. T. SMEDLEY

CONFIDENCES

[*Contributed by the artist to the Exhibition Number of Scribner's Magazine.*]

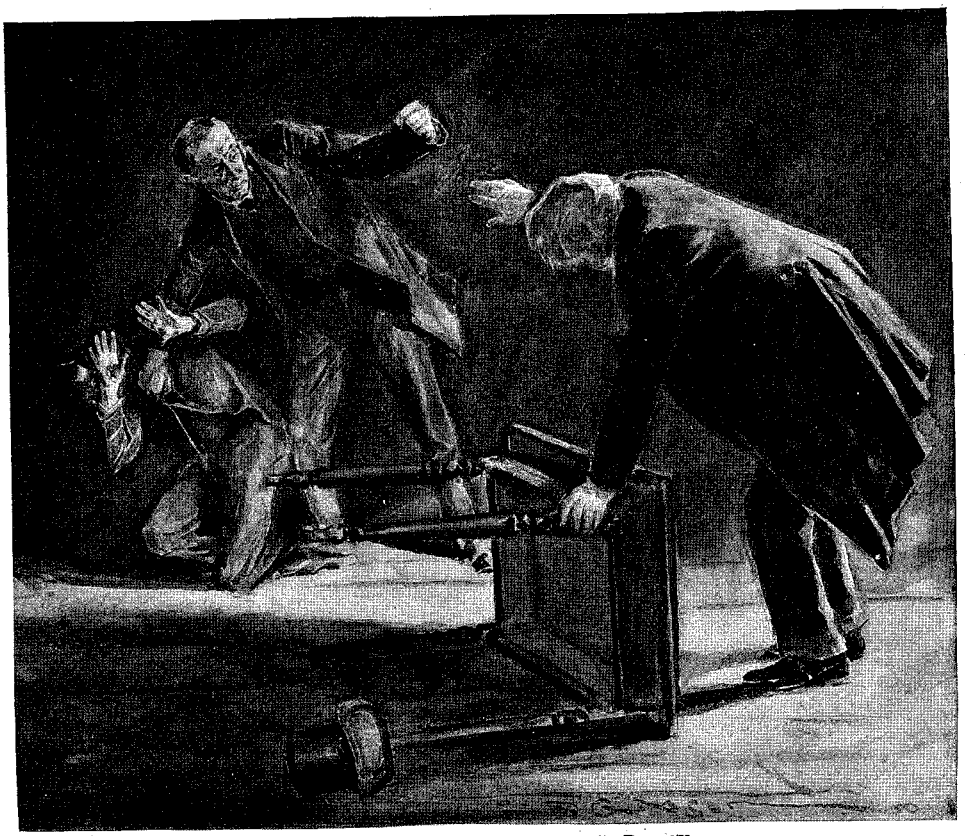
PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

swindler," said he. "Those poor souls 'll never see their money again."

"Well, something held me back from him, thanks be to God!" protested Dennis with pride, though he looked

ther Ryan, slowly. "I paid the most of his bills myself when he went to the seminary. Poor Tom Nolan couldn't do it, with his small wages and the sickness and trouble he used to have. Danny



"Take that, will you now, Danny Nolan."—Page 673.

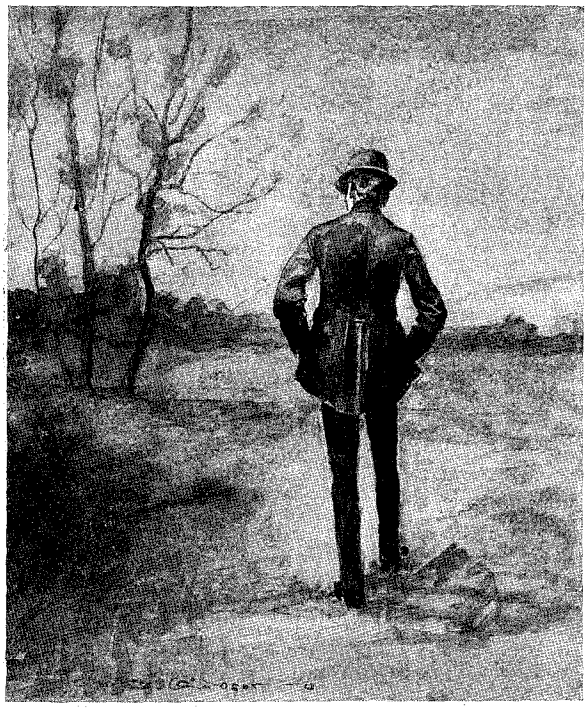
shocked and anxious. "I come very near givin' him all I had too. Whin a craze gets amongst folks, one must be doing like all the rest; ain't it so, sir? And that Dan was the best scholar in the schools here; don't you mind the praise he'd get from every one, an' his fadther was proud as a paycock. I does be thinkin' them schools has their faults. If a man dies now an' l'aves a houseful of childher they don't be half so fit to earn their bread as they were in the old times. I'm thinkin' the old folks was wiser wit' the childher, Father Ryan, sir!"

"There never was a boy in any parish I had these forty-five years that I took the pains with I did with him," said Fa-

was my altar-boy—a pretty face there was on him and a laughing eye. He always stood to me for a little brother of mine, and looked the very marrow of him when I first saw him, and Tom came to the mills. My little brother was my playmate, we were always together like twin lambs. I can mind myself now, and I running home alone, crying, to tell my poor mother that we'd run away to the rocks, and a great wave came in and licked him off before my very eyes, and I a bit higher up on the shore. I wake up dreaming of him, stiff with the horror and a cold sweat all over me, after a lifetime that's gone between me and that day. I'm an old man now, Dennis Call, and my mind's always been in a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

priest's holy business. But I've a warm Irish heart in me, and there are times when I'd like a brother's young child, or one of my sister's that I left long ago in Kerry, or to see my old mother shake her head and have the laugh at me, and I sitting there in the long winter evening in my still house. And when that young Danny Nolan gave a smile at me, like the little lad that went under the sea, and never was afraid, or trying to get away from me because I was the priest, I liked him more than I knew. I couldn't see then why he shouldn't make a great man, and I helped him the best I could. I know plenty of harm of him now, God forgive him and bring him to repentance."



"Dan Nolan came across the fields."—Page 676.

The old man scowled and looked away. His heart was filled with sorrow. Dennis's ready tongue was checked, but he was grumbling to himself about the black heart of Danny Nolan. "I begin to think that sharp wits are the least of all the means by which a man wins true success," said Father Ryan.

"Everybody thought well of Dan Nolan then, sir." Dennis tried to comfort him; he had seen Father Ryan angry and stern, but never cast down like this.

They came to an open, grassy space on a shelf of the great hill. At one side was the cellar where a house had stood long ago; some roses still grew about it, and there was much of the solemn little cypress plant, so often seen in country burying-grounds, growing about the crumbling foundations and straying off into the grass. There was a smooth, broad door-step partly overgrown, and a hop-vine was sending up its determined shoots near by where it could find nothing to twine upon. The old door-step had evidently served as a seat for stray wanderers; there was a place before it that had been worn by feet, like the beginning of a path. The house had been gone many years, but one might have thought that its ghost was there, and the door-step was still trodden by those unseen inhabitants who went and came. The priest may have thought this, but Dennis saw a gun wad lying by the step, and a little bird fluttered away, as if it had been finding a few stray crumbs.

There was a magnificent view of the widespread lower country — woods and clearings and bushy pasture-lands stretching miles upon miles, with a river dividing them like a shining ribbon; and white villages, with their tiny spires and sprinkled houses and heavy dark mills. As you turned the other way you looked up the dark hill slope. The road appeared to end here by the deserted farm-stead, but some winter wood-roads led off in different directions.

Father Ryan stopped the breathless mare and got down clumsily. "We'll walk from here, Dennis," he said, and Dennis also alighted. His face was befogged with perplexity. They plunged deep into the woods along one of the half-overgrown winter tracks which led

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

up and over a high shoulder of the great hill.

"'Tis like the way to the cave of the foxy 'oman," said Dennis, half aloud, as a dry twig whipped him in the face, and Father Ryan heard him and laughed.

"Well, it's wonderful how those old tales do stay in the mind," he said, cheerfully. "I was working away with a book yesterday, a fine hard knot of Latin it was too, and I got sleepy and not a bit could I think of but how did the story of the Little Cakeen go that my old granny used to tell me before she'd give me a little cakeen herself that she'd have hidden in her blue cloak. I'd be afraid to eat it, too, after the tale. Well, I think it might be twenty years since I thought of it, but I could not rid my mind of the trick of that foolish story, and it kept twirling itself round and round in my mind. It may be the way with old folks. I begin to feel old."

"'Twas a great story of the Little Cakeen," agreed Dennis, solemnly. "I do be telling it to the childher; there's nothing anybodys tells that they'd like so well, wid their little screeches always in the same place. 'Twas the same way wid my brothers and meself at home. We'd better mind, sir, lest ourselves gets on the fox's back an' into his big mout'. Do you know where you do be going?" Dennis looked about him anxiously.

The priest only laughed; a queer laugh it was that might mean one thing or another. "Come on!" he said. "You make me think of another old tale they used to be telling at home about one Mrs. O'Flaherty's donkey, that could neither go nor stand still."

At this moment, when the conversation had taken a most sociable and even merry tone, the two men found themselves on the edge of the thick woods with an open, partly overgrown, acre of land before them. The seedling pines had covered a piece of land cleared and deserted again many years before; they had grown close to the tumble-down old house, which had sometimes been used as a shelter by lumbermen who were at work among the hills, or sportsmen who might have taken refuge there in wet weather. Dennis was astonished to find himself there; he remembered the place well, but they had reached it by so short a path that the priest seemed to have brought him by the aid of magic. Dennis had taken heart at a change for the better in Father Ryan's manner and was already preparing to laugh at the expected story about a donkey, but Father Ryan looked stern and priestly again and began to stride forward, telling Dennis by a gesture to wait outside the house. "'Tis a den of thieves I'm sure now," muttered Dennis, but he followed his companion to the door and stood there strong and sturdy and not displeased, looking about him suspiciously like a wary sentinel.

The priest stepped softly on the pasture turf among the little pine-trees and entered the door as if he did not mean to be heard. Immediately there was a scuffle and crash inside and the jar of a heavy fall, upon which Dennis Call rushed in with his eyes dancing and his fists clenched.

There, in the middle of the dismal rain-stained room, by an overturned table and broken chair, Father Ryan was fighting with a younger man and getting the worst of it. Dennis pounced down and caught the fellow off by the shoulders. His great thumbs held the cords like iron bolts; he stood the rascal back on his knees and gave him a terrible shaking. Dennis had been a tidy man at a fight when he was younger, and his rage revived the best of his experience. "Get up, sir; get up, your riverence!" he commanded, in a bold voice. "L'ave the beggar to me!" and he kept his clutch with one hand while he administered a succession of sound blows with the other. "Take that, will you now, Danny Nolan, an' that wit' it!" he said, scornfully. "Is it full of drink you are, I do' know, to strike down an old an' rispicted man that's been a fadther to you and he God's priest beside! I'll bate the life out of you and l'ave you here to the crows an' I get a saucy word out o' your head, so there now!" and Dennis proceeded to cuff and shake his captive unmercifully.

The old priest looked shocked and shaken; he got upon his feet and tried to brush the dust from his black clothes. There was no place to sit, it was a dirty, stifling place, and he turned and went swaying with faltering steps to the door, and Dennis, holding the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

young man's arm in an unflinching grip, went after him.

"Sit down on the step, sir," he said, anxiously, to the old man. "I hope it isn't faint you are, sir?"

Father Ryan seated himself upon the crumbling door-sill, and Dennis backed himself and his captive against a bowlder that stood in front of the old house, close by. As he turned to take a good look at Dan Nolan a feeling of contempt stole into his honest face. In the clear light the young man looked so colorless and disreputable, wrecked and ruined by an only too evident life of vice and ignorance of every sort of decent behavior that he seemed but a poor antagonist for a man like Dennis Call. There was little left of his boyish good looks and fine spirit. He must have thrown Father Ryan by some trick that caught him unprepared, for in spite of his age the priest looked almost the stronger of the two. Dennis felt a strange anxiety as he saw how badly out of breath Father Ryan was still, and what bad color had come to his lips.

"Will I get you a sup of water, sir?" he asked, eagerly. "This thing 'ont run away; or I'll just stun the poor cr'ature a bit wit' me fist so he can't step foot an' he tries. I'm afraid you're bad off, sir, so I am."

"No, no," said Father Ryan. "Let go his arm now."

"I don't dare l'ave him go, sir," protested Dennis.

"Let go his arm. Stand out, Dan!" and a strange light blazed in the old man's eyes. Danny Nolan, in his smart, dirty, city-made clothes, stood out a step in front of Dennis, a poor wretched image of a young man as ever startled the squirrels and jays of that wild, deserted bit of country. He cast a furtive glance to right and left, but the old priest raised a warning hand.

"No, you won't run, Dan, my boy," he said. "My old heart is ready to break at the sorry sight of you. Those poor legs of yours would throw you before you could run a rod. Take out the money that's in your pockets. Dennis, keep your eye on him now. Take it out, I say!"

Father Ryan rose to his great height with a black and angry look; his years seemed to fall off his shoulders like a cloak, and Dennis stepped forward eager for the fray. The fellow was at bay. He looked for a moment as sharp and ugly as a weasel, then the cowardice in him showed itself, he began to whimper and weaken, and so fell upon his knees.

"It is in the State's Prison that you ought to be. I know it well," said Father Ryan, sternly.

"Will I give him a nate kick or two, your riverence?" inquired Dennis, suggestively. "Maybe 'twill help him to mind what you do be saying, the dirty bla'guard."

Danny Nolan, still whimpering, took something from his pocket and dropped it before him on the turf. "There now," he said, trying to be bold, "Let me go."

"Go through his pockets yourself, Dennis," said the priest, and he stood watching, while this business was carefully accomplished, and a little heap of counterfeit bills was gathered at their feet, which Dennis had sought for with little tenderness. "What have you hidden in the house beside?" he demanded, looking up in black rage, as Danny Nolan stood there, surly and flushed.

"If 'twas my last word, I'd tell you the same," he answered. "There's no more but this. I was only waiting till evening, so I'd get away. There's two dollars there that's good," he added, sulkily touching the money with his foot.

"Ye'd best give it to his riverence for a collection then," Dennis advised. "Ain't you the dirthy divil!"

"I've had awful hard luck," said Danny, in a grieved tone. "'Twas a man on the cars give me this——"

"Why didn't you come straight to those who were your friends?" said Father Ryan, sadly. "You have been robbing those that loved you and taking their little earnings—you are a liar and a thief. How will you face them now and go to them for food and shelter. Who'll want to give you a day's work? You have been living with cheats and liars; see what they have done for you, and how rich and happy you come home to those that have praised you the length of the town. What do you mean to do?"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"They're out after me; the officers are out after me, sir." The poor rascal instantly turned to his old friend for help. "I can't stop here, 'twas the man that gave me this stuff to get rid of it himself, and then went and told."

"You sent down to the mills to some fellows you thought bad enough to buy this trash. Don't lie to me, Dan! You have fallen into this sort of thing by your own choice. Come now, if Dennis and I will stand by you will you try to be decent and live honest? You'll be dead this time next year if you don't, and there's God's truth for you. I'll try you this once more, God helping me. I'll not send you home to those that aren't able to keep you. I've a little money put by, and I'll lend you something for those you have robbed and cheated with your stories about the mine."

"I was cheated myself in the first place, Father Ryan," said Nolan. Then he fell to sobbing and covered his face with both his hands. "I've been bad, you're right, sir, but oh, try me again. I don't know what'll I do. I'm starved here, and every bush that rustles turns me cold these three nights. I'll do the best I can, sir. I wouldn't have said it so easy yesterday, but I'm beat to the ground now. Everybody's turned against me. I thought some friends of mine would be here last night——"

"Come, stand up an' behave like a man!" Dennis gave him a vigorous jerk by way of stimulant. "We mane no harm by the likes of you. Do now as Father Ryan says, since he's so willing to try you." There was kindliness in his tone, though the shake was contradictory. "I'll stand by you meself for Father Ryan's pleasure, but it goes hard wid me to say the word."

"You'll come to me this evening at eight o'clock," said the priest. "I'll be thinking what's best to do. I can't stand between you and the laws you've broken. You'll stay at my house the night. Mrs. Dillon 'll be washing in the morning, the first thing is to make you look decent. Then I'll find a way to talk with your father, poor honest man!"

"I'd as soon go chop at Tom Nolan wit' me axe," muttered Dennis.

The priest stooped and struck a match on the gray rock and touched it to the counterfeit bills, stirring them now and then with his foot as they smouldered. When the few ashes began to blow in the light spring wind, and there was little left but an ugly small scar in the green turf, Father Ryan held out his hand and Danny Nolan tried not to see it and turned away. The old priest could not help a sigh. Then the young man, who had known every sin, threw himself upon the mercy of this merciful old friend. No matter if Dennis stood by with his aggravating sense of honesty, his narrow experience of a stupid mill town, Dan Nolan caught hold of Father Ryan's hand and clung to it as if his whole heart were spent in love and gratitude. "O God, help me; I'll not fail you this night, sir. 'Tis the Lord sent you to me, sir. 'Tis you were always good to me when I was a little boy minding the altar, sir."

"You were always great wit' your fine words and your smart letters," grumbled Dennis, who in spite of himself was much affected. If his own sons should ever go wrong, God send them such a friend. "See now that you give his riverence satisfaction for all the trouble he's taking, and pay him back his money too. There's work enough if you'd only be dacint, but if I'd hear from any of your tricks, or you'd be doing harm among the young folks, Lord be good to me but I'd be the one to break your neck, so I would. When I think of that pritty gerrl you've fooled——!"

"Don't shame the man any more. We'll give him his chance to do better. 'Tis God does the same every day for you and me," said Father Ryan.

The May wind in the pine-woods was like the sound of the sea as the two elder men turned away to go down the hill, not once looking back. The old priest left Dan Nolan behind as if he had forgotten him, and Dennis was awed into speechlessness as he walked alongside.

The sorrel mare was restless. She had unwisely browsed the sharp-thorned sprouting rose-bushes, and had got the reins tangled about her feet. Father Ryan climbed into the carriage, he began to feel lame and tired, and Dennis,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

still silent, took the mare by the head and led her carefully down the steepest part of the road. When they came to the lowest slope of the hill he got in and took the reins, and they went quickly home. The church-bells began to ring for vespers as they neared the town.

"I'll be a trifle late, I'm sorry," said the priest. "Leave me at the church and you go on with the mare, Denny. Oh, I'm all right, 'twas fine and pleasant in the green woods. It seems long to me since mass was over."

"My saints in heaven, but ain't he the father to us!" exclaimed Dennis, a moment later. He still felt a delightful sense of excitement and adventure, but after they had parted at the church something choked him, as he thought of Father Ryan's figure as he had seen him go along the little path to the vestry, with that dust on the back of his coat. As he came back to the church himself he overtook Mary O'Donnell, who greeted him with pleasure and even curiosity, and some other friends made mention of the fact that he had been away with the priest. The parishioners were used to being ignorant about most of Father Ryan's affairs, a priest could never make talk about his errands of business and mercy as another man could.

The warm May Sunday indeed seemed long, the vesper service did not often attract Dennis Call. He was always in his place at mass, but he took his Sunday sleep and stroll in the afternoon. He made himself easy in the corner of the pew, he picked some pine-needles out of the cuff of his coat, and he said, a little grudgingly, a prayer for Danny Nolan. He noticed that there was a bruise beginning to show itself on the old priest's forehead, and how the hands trembled that were lifted at the altar. The doctor had been known to say that Father Ryan was not a sound man, that he had better not take long walks alone any more, or overtax himself as he often did, and Dennis wondered vaguely if this were not the reason he had been called upon that day for company.

"I'd like to clout the saucy bla'guard a couple o' times more," he grumbled to himself, but his heart was not without compassion, his own boys were just beginning to put on the airs and to share the ambitions of men, and poor Tom Nolan, his old friend and neighbor, must hear sad news of Danny, and that soon. Dennis blinked his sleepy eyes and looked reverently at Father Ryan's tall figure at the altar. The setting sun brought out the color and tarnished gold thread of the worn vestments. The paper flowers that a French woman had made new at Easter looked gay and almost real in the pleasant light.

"'Tis in many strange places that a priest does be having to serve God," said Dennis to himself. "I'm thinking Danny Nolan 'll light out this night wit' the two dollars, an' we'll see no more of him. Faix, 'twould be best for him, the young fool; the likes of him will break every heart, stay or go!"

That night, however, just at dark, Dan Nolan came across the fields and presently stole out from a thicket at the foot of the priest's little garden, and went into the house. The lights were bright, there was a good supper on the table. A terrible sea of wickedness was near to dragging him down. As the hungry crestfallen offender sat there, abashed by all the light and good cheer, the old man's tired face shone with golden hopefulness. Father Ryan even persuaded himself that the look of his own young brother had come back again into Danny Nolan's eyes.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE COMÉDIE FRANÇAISE AT CHICAGO.

By Francisque Sarcey.

YOU may well suppose that here in Paris the announcement of your Universal Exposition is in everybody's thoughts. The first idea of the director of the Comédie Française was to visit it at the head of his whole company. The moment was propitious. About once in ten years the Théâtre Français is compelled to close for a month or two, for repairs to the auditorium. Naturally, the summer season is chosen for this; and it is a tradition that during these fifty or sixty days of enforced idleness the troupe shall either go into the provinces or abroad, to give performances and extend the taste for its répertoire.

Ten years ago, under the orders of M. Perrin, it went to London, and I accompanied it in the capacity of historiographer. The English gave us a reception which I shall never forget in my life. It would be impossible to be more courteous and at the same time more splendid. I shall retain a life-long remembrance of the first performance, with which these evenings were opened. When the curtain went up, all the troupe was ranged in a semi-circle about the two busts of Shakespeare and Molière. On the right and left, standing apart from the group, were, on the one side, Mlle. Sarah Bernhardt, in a linen tunic, simple and serious, without a single jewel, leaning against the pedestal of a bust of tragedy; and on the other side, Mlle. Croizette, then in the full splendor of her beauty and her reputation, dazzling with freshness and sparkling with diamonds, in the costume of Célimène, and with her fan in her hand.

It was a sight at once splendid and charming. There was not in all the company a single artist whose name was not celebrated, or at all events well known. The performance was only one long triumph.

Ten years before, the same company, driven away from the theatre by the same cause, had arranged a tour through the principal towns of France, under the orders of M. Thierry. I had been of the party in this case also. I had gone with the players to Dijon, to Lyons, and to Marseilles, and it is one of the most exquisite memories of my youth. I described from day to day, in the paper for which I was writing (although I was then but little known), the ovations tendered in each of these cities to that incomparable troop of players.

How much happier still I should have been if I could have set sail with them for America and have followed them to Chicago! It is going to be necessary to close the Theatre for the month of next July; the repairs needed in the auditorium are urgent and cannot be neglected longer. This gave an unequalled pretext for making some tour or other. Then there were no risks to run; for adventurous managers, of whom there are so many in America, had already come to tempt M. Jules Claretie, and submit to him advantageous and even brilliant proposals.

Besides, it did not enter into the views of the Comédie Française to make money out of its name. All that it would have expected in the matter would be to get back without expenses, and to return from the journey without its having cost the common treasury (the *caisse sociale*) any loss. As to this there was no doubt. The expenses of the trip, however large they would have been, would have been covered — and more.

The plan was very seductive to M. Jules Claretie—and to me still more so. I pushed it with all my energies; at the age which I have reached it was the last opportunity which would ever be offered me to visit America. I should have a good reason for going if I could make the trip among the luggage of the Comédie Française, of which I am, so to speak, the titular critic; but if it stayed in France, why of course I should have to stay there too. Farewell, my last

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dream of hope! for how would it look if, without any outside motive, I should sever the bonds of daily duties and habits which attach me to Paris, to say nothing of spending so large a sum, without any compensation for it all? So I did my best to persuade everybody in favor of the plan. I did not succeed. The scheme of the trip has been abandoned, and I do not believe that this decision will be reversed—a fact which I bitterly regret.

Should you like to know the reason of this sacrifice—or rather, the reasons? For there are several; and among them some which are not told, but which I will tell you all the same, for over there in the United States these indiscretions, which will never come back to us, will make no difference.

You know that the Comédie Française receives a considerable subvention from the state. But the principle of this subsidy has been for some years violently attacked in our Chamber. Many of the deputies sent by the provinces look jealously upon the favors granted to a house which seems to them to be exclusively Parisian. They ask what interest Lyons, Marseilles, Brest, Bordeaux, and Carpentras have in paying a company of comedians which performs in Paris? which only serves to heighten the lustre of the capital and to give pleasure to Parisians?

In my opinion this is a very false idea; but it gains ground every year, and many good judges foresee the moment when it will rally a majority which will altogether suppress theatrical subsidies. This will be the end of the Comédie Française; and a whole past of art and glory will crumble in an instant. I myself believe that this solution is unavoidable; but still it seems to me necessary to delay the termination as long as possible.

Well! the provinces would look with very great disfavor on the Comédie Française carrying abroad Molière, Beaumarchais, Augier, and Dumas. They would not fail to cry: "It is we who pay for it; and when the company leaves Paris it rushes off to Chicago, meaning to make a lot of money! Why should we continue to give it ours?"

This reasoning would not have a shade of common-sense; but it would be urged without any doubt, and would probably have all the more influence upon people's minds because it is perfectly absurd. It is a hundred to one, therefore, that if the Comédie Française allowed itself this excursion to the United States its resources would be cut off when it came back.

This consideration, which is of the political sort, is the one which weighed most in the minds of the ministry; and you know that the Comédie Française is not allowed to go away without the formal authorization of the government. This was refused; and even in case there should be a change of ministry, the new minister of the fine arts would be influenced by the same reasons.

But this is not all. The Comédie Française itself has personal reasons for dreading this excursion. The company is composed of two elements, the veterans, who are very celebrated and whose names would have some prestige even at Chicago, and the young people, some of whom have a great deal of talent, but a talent not yet sufficiently proved, and of which the reputation has not yet passed beyond the walls of Paris. The former, it must be said, would not care to make so long a journey. Some of them would undoubtedly undertake it individually, for their own benefit, with the idea of making a neat sum and bringing back what we call in France "a pot of money." But to go out there, so far, in a body, to distribute the profits among the whole? and besides, would there be any profits? This prospect did not smile upon them. "Better stay at home," they said.

Yes, but the Comédie Française without these—it would still be the Comédie Française decapitated; and they surely could be compelled to go? But the two parties could not be brought together unless one of them had its whole heart in the affair energetically; and they would come to it with a bad grace. I know some of them who have no desire to expose to new publics a reputation slowly and laboriously gained in Paris, or to compromise themselves in the opinion of the American press, which might say "*Ce n'est que cela?*" (So that's all it is?)

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The young people were more enthusiastic for the idea. It's so diverting, when you're between twenty-five and forty, to see new countries! Still there were some who hesitated and who grumbled under their breath. We are very domestic in France, oh, *very* domestic! You have no idea in America of the power of the word, and perhaps you haven't its equivalent in your language;—for nothing is less American than the liking for the chimney-corner at home, the dread of quitting your slippers, and of breaking off the cherished habits of your every-day life.

So when Jules Claretie hazarded the proposal, he did not find in the company the enthusiasm which was necessary if he was to plead the cause of this tour at the ministry.

Finally—and I am somewhat ashamed to betray to you the secret of this last motive, for I know you will laugh at it; but still, it dropped a great weight into the scale—it is clear that if the Comédie Française were to make the voyage it would all have to embark in the same ship. Now, suppose there should be an accident! There would be the whole Maison de Molière swallowed up in the bosom of the deep! Once these players had disappeared there would be no reconstituting the company; and you cannot imagine the inextricable complications which would come up in its liquidation.

"And this is why," as Sganarelle says, "Your daughter is dumb." This is why we are not going to Chicago; and I am very sorry for it.

THE TAXIDERMIST.

By George W. Cable.

ONE day a humming-bird got caught in a cobweb in our greenhouse. It had no real need to seek that dank, artificial heat, for we were in the very heart of that Creole summer-time when bird-notes are only fewer than sunbeams, and the flowers of field and garden are in such multitude they seem to follow one about, offering their honeys and perfumes and begging to be gathered. Our child saw the embodied joy fall, a joy no longer, among the few tropical things that had been its lure, seized it, and clasping it too tightly, brought it to me dead.

He cried so over the loss that I forebore to moralize or chide, and promised to have it stuffed. This is how I came to know Manouvrier, the Taxidermist in St. Peter Street.

I passed his place twice before I found it. The front shop was very small, dingily clean and scornfully unmercantile. Of the very few specimens of his skill to be seen round about not one was on parade, yet everyone was somehow an achievement, a happy surprise, a lasting delight. I admit that taxidermy is not classed among the fine arts; but you know there is a way of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

making everything—anything—an art instead of a craft or a commerce, and such was the way of this shop's big, dark, hairy-faced, shaggy-headed master. I saw his unsmiling face soften and his eye grow kind as mine lighted up with approbation of his handiwork.

When I handed him the humming-bird he held it tenderly in his wide palm, and as I was wondering to myself how such a hand as that could manipulate frail and tiny things and bring forth delicate results, he looked into my face and asked, with a sort of magisterial gentleness:

"How she git kill', dat lill' bird?"

I told him. I could feel my mood and words take their tone from him, though he outwardly heard me through with entire impassiveness; and when I finished, I knew we were friends. I presently ventured to praise the specimen of his skill nearest at hand; a wild turkey listening alarmedly as if it would the next instant utter that ringing "quit!" which makes each separate drop of a hunter's blood tingle. But with an odd languor in his gravity, he replied:

"Now, dass not well make; lit' bit worse, bad enough to put in frawnt window. I take you inside; come."

We passed through into a private workroom immediately behind the shop. His wife sat there sewing; a broad, motherly woman of forty-five, fat, tranquil, kind, with an old eye, a young voice, and a face that had got its general flabbiness through much paddling and gnawing of other women's teething babes. She sat still unintroduced, but welcomed me with a smile.

I was saying to her husband that a humming-bird was a very small thing to ask him to—But he stopped me with his lifted palm.

"My fran', a humming-bird has dthe passione'—dthe egstasee'! One drop of blood wid the pas-sione in it"—He waved his hand with a jerk of the thumb in disdain of spoken words, and it was I who added,

"Is bigger than the sun?"

"Hah!" was all he uttered in approval, turning as if to go to work. I feared I had disappointed him.

"God measures by the soul, not by the size," I suggested. But he would say no more, and his wife put in as softly as a kettle beginning to sing,

"Ah, ha, ha! I thing thaz where the good God show varrie good sanse."

I began looking here and there in heartiest admiration of the products of his art and presently we were again in full sympathy and talking eagerly. As I was going he touched my arm:

"You will say de soul is part' from dat lill' bird. And—yass; but"—he let a gesture speak the rest.

"I know," replied I; "you propose to make the soul seem to come back and leave us its portrait. I believe you will." Whereupon he gave me his first, faint smile, and detained me with another touch.

"M'sieu' Smeet; when you was bawn?"

"I? October 12, 1844. Why do you ask?"

"O nut'n; only I thing you make me luck; twel', h-eighteen, fawty-fo'—I play me doze numb'r' in de lott'ree to-day."

"Why, pshaw! you don't play the lottery, do you?"

"Yass. I play her; why not? She make me reech some doze day'. Win fifty dollah one time laz year."

The soft voice of the wife spoke up—"An' spend it all to the wife of my dead brother. What use him be reech? I thing he dawn't stoff bird' no betteh."

But the husband responded more than half to himself,

"Yass, I thing mebbe I stoff him lill' mo' betteh."

When, some days afterward I called again, thinking as I drew near how much fineness of soul and life, seen or unseen, must have existed in earlier generations to have produced this man, I noticed the inconspicuous sign over his door, P. T. B. Manouvrier, and as he led me at once into the back room I asked him playfully what such princely abundance of initials might stand for.

"Doze? Ah, doze make only Pas-Trop-Bon."

I appealed to his wife; but she, with her soft, placid laugh, would only confirm him:

"Yass; Pastropbon; he like that name. Daz all de way I call him—Pastropbon."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The humming-bird was ready for me. I will not try to tell how life-like and beautiful the artist had made it. Even with him I took pains to be somewhat reserved. As I stood holding and admiring the small green wonder, I remarked that I was near having to bring him that morning another and yet finer bird. A shade of displeasure (and, I feared, of suspicion also) came to his face as he asked me how that was. I explained.

Going into my front hall, whose veranda-door framed in a sunny picture of orange-boughs, jasmine-vines and white-clouded blue sky, I had found a male ruby-throat circling about the ceiling, not wise enough to stoop, fly low, and pass out by the way it had come in. It occurred to me that it might be the mate of the one already mine. For some time all the efforts I could contrive, either to capture or free it, were vain. Round and round it flew, silently beating and bruising its exquisite little head against the lofty ceiling, the glory of its luminous red throat seeming to heighten into an expression of unspeakable agony. At last my wife ran for a long broom, and, as in her absence I stood watching the self-snared captive's struggle, the long, tiny beak which had never done worse than go twittering with rapture to the grateful hearts of thousands of flowers, began to trace along the smooth, white ceiling a scarlet thread of pure heart's blood. The broom came. I held it up, the flutterer lighted upon it, and at first slowly, warily, and then triumphantly, I lowered it under the lintel out into the veranda, and the bird darted away into the garden and was gone like a soul into heaven.

In the middle of my short recital Manouvrier had sunk down upon the arm of his wife's rocking-chair with one huge hand on both of hers folded over her sewing, and as I finished he sat motionless, still gazing into my face.

"But," I started, with sudden pretence of business impulse, "how much am I to pay?"

He rose, slowly, and looked dreamily at his wife; she smiled at him, and he grunted,

"Nut'n'."

"Oh, my friend," I laughed, "that's absurd!"

But he had no reply, and his wife, as she resumed her sewing, said, sweetly, as if to her needle, "Ah, I thing Pastropbon dawn't got to charge nut'n' if he dawn't feel like." And I could not move them.

As I was leaving them, a sudden conjecture came to me.

"Did those birthday numbers bring you any luck?"

The taxidermist shook his head, good-naturedly, but when his wife laughed he turned upon her.

"Wait! I dawn't be done wid doze numb'r' yet."

I guessed that, having failed with them in the daily drawings, he would shift the figures after some notion of magical significance and venture a ticket, whole or fractional, in the monthly drawing.

Scarcely ten days after, as I sat at breakfast with my newspaper spread beside my plate, I fairly spilled my coffee as my eye fell upon the name of P. T. B. Manouvrier, of Number — St. Peter Street. Old Pastropbon had drawn seventy-five thousand dollars in the lottery.

All the first half of the day, wherever I was, in the street-car, at my counting-desk, on the exchange, no matter to what I gave my attention, behind that superficial attention my thought was ever on my friend the taxidermist. At luncheon it was the same. He was rich! And what, now? What next? And what—ah! what—at last? Would the end be foul or fair? I hoped, yet feared. I feared again; and yet I hoped.

A familiar acquaintance, a really good fellow, decent, rich, "born of pious parents," and determined to have all the ready-made refinements and tastes that pure money could buy, came and sat with me at my lunch-table.

"I wonder," he began, "if you know where you are, or what you're here for. I've been watching you for five minutes and I don't believe you do. See here, what sort of an old donkey is that bird-stuffer of yours?"

"You know, then, his good fortune of yesterday, do you?"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"No, I don't. I know my bad fortune with him last week."

I dropped my spoon into my soup. "Why, what?"

"Oh, no great shakes. Only, I went to his place to buy that wild turkey you told me about. I wanted to stand it away up on top of that beautiful old carved buffet I picked up in England last year. I was fully prepared to buy it on your say-so, but, all the same, I saw its merits the moment I set eyes on it. It has but one fault; did you notice that? I don't believe you did. I pointed it out to him."

"You pointed—what did he say?"

"He said I was right."

"Why, what was the fault?"

"Fault? Why, the perspective is bad; not exactly bad, but poor; lacks richness and rhythm."

"And yet you bought the thing."

"No, I didn't."

"You didn't buy it?"

"No, sir, I didn't buy it. I began by pricing three or four other things first, so he couldn't know which one to stick the fancy price on to, and incidentally I thought I would tell him—you'd told me, you remember, how your accounts of your two birds had warmed him up and melted his feelings——"

"I didn't tell you. My wife told your wife, and your wife, I——"

"Yes, yes. Well, anyhow, I thought I'd try the same game, and so I told him how I had stuffed a bird once upon a time myself. It was a pigeon, with every feather as white as snow; a fan-tail. It had belonged to my little boy who died. I thought it would make such a beautiful emblem at his funeral, rising with wings outspread, you know, typical of the resurrection—we buried him from the Sunday-school, you remember. And so I killed it and wired it and stuffed it myself. It was hard to hang it in a soaring attitude, owing to it's being a fan-tail, but I managed it."

"And you told that to Manouvrier! What did he say?"

"Say? He never so much as cracked a smile. When I'd done he stood so still, looking at me, that I turned and sort o' stroked the turkey and said, jestingly, says I, 'How much a pound for this gobbler?'"

"That ought to have warmed him up."

"Well, it didn't. He smiled like a dancing-master, lifted my hand off the bird and says, says 'e, 'She's not for sale.' Then he turned to go into his back room and leave me standing there. Well, that warmed *me* up. Says I, 'What 'n thunder is it here for, then? and if it ain't for sale, come back here and show me what is!'

"'Nawt'n',' says 'e, with the same polite smile. 'Nawt'n' for sale. I come back w'en you gone.' His voice was sweet as sugar, but he slammed the door. I would have followed him in and put some better manners into him with a kick, but the old orang-outang had turned the key inside, and when I'd had time to remember that I was a deacon and Sunday-school teacher I walked away. What do you mean by his good fortune of yesterday?"

"I mean he struck Charlie Howard for seventy-five thousand."

My hearer's mouth dropped open. He was equally amazed and amused. "Well, well, well! That accounts for his silly high-headedness."

"Ah! no: that was last week and the drawing was only yesterday."

"Oh, that's so. I don't keep run of that horrible lottery business. It makes me sick at heart to see the hideous canker poisoning the character and blasting the lives of every class of our people—why, don't you think so?"

"Oh, yes, I—I do. Yes, I certainly do!"

"But your conviction isn't exactly red-hot, I perceive. Come, wake up."

We rose. At the first street corner, as we were parting, I noticed he was still talking of the lottery.

"Pestilential thing," he was calling it. "Men blame it lightly on the ground that there are other forms of gambling which our laws don't reach. I suppose a tiger in a village mustn't be killed till we have killed all the tigers back in the woods!"

I assented absently and walked away full of a vague shame. For I know as well as anybody that a man without a quick, strong, aggressive, insistent indignation against undoubted evil is a very poor stick. At dinner that even-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing, wife broke a long silence with the question:

"Did you go to see Manouvrier?"

"Nn—o."

She looked at me drolly. "Did you go half way and turn back?"

"Wife," I said, "that's precisely what I did." And we dropped the subject.

But in the night I felt her fingers softly touch my shoulder.

"Warm night," I remarked.

"Dear," said she, "it'll be time enough to be troubled about that man when he's given you cause."

"I'm not troubled, wife; I'm simply interested. I'll go down to-morrow and see him." A little later it rained, very softly, and straight down, so that there was no need to shut the windows, and I slept like an infant until the room was full of sunshine.

All the next day and evening, summer though it was and the levee and sugar-sheds and cotton-yards virtually empty, I was kept preoccupied by unexpected business and could not go near St. Peter Street. Both my partners were away on their vacations. But on the third afternoon our office regained its summer quiet and I was driving my pen through the last matter that prevented my going where I pleased, when I was disturbed by the announcement of a visitor. I pushed my writing on to a finish though he stood just at my back. Then I turned to bid him talk fast as my time was limited, when who should it be but Manouvrier. I took him into my private office, gave him a chair and said:

"I was just coming to see you."

"You 'ad somesin' to git stoff?"

"No; I—Oh, I didn't know but you might like to see me."

"Yass?—Well—yass. I wish you come yeste'day."

"Indeed? Why so; to protect you from reporters and beggars?"

"Naw; my wife she keep off all doze Pitter an' John. Naw; one man bring me one wile cat to stoff. Ah! a *so* fine as I never see! Beautiful liked da dev'l! Sinse two day' an' night' I can't mek out 'f I want fix dat wile cat stan'in' up aw sittin' down!"

"Did you decide at last?"

"Yass, I dis-ide. 'Ow you thing I dis-ide?"

"Ah! you're too hard for me. But one thing I know."

"Yass? What you know?"

"That you will never do so much to anything as to leave my imagination nothing to do. You will always give my imagination strong play and never a bit of hard work."

"Come! Come and see!"

I took my hat. "Is that what you called to see me about?"

"Ah!" He started in sudden recollection and brought forth a certified check for the seventy-five thousand dollars. "You keep dat?—lill' w'ile?—faw me? Yass; till I mek out 'ow I goin' to spen' 'er."

"Manouvrier, may I make one condition?"

"Yass."

"It is that you will never play the lottery again."

"Ah! Yass, I play 'er ag'in! You want know whan ole Pastropbon play 'er ag'in? One doze fine mawnin'—mebbee—dat sun—goin' rise hisself in de wes'. *Eh bien:* w'en ole Pastropbon see dat, he play dat lott'ree ag'in. But biffo' he see dat"— He flirted his thumb.

Not many days later a sudden bereavement brought our junior partner back from Europe and I took my family North for a more stimulating air. Before I went I called on my St. Peter Street friend to say that during my absence either of my partners would fulfil any wish of his concerning the money. In his wife's sewing-basket in the back room I noticed a batch of unopened letters, and ventured a question which had been in my mind for several days.

"Manouvrier, you must get a host of letters these days from people who think you ought to help them because you have got money and they haven't. Do you read them?"

"Naw!" He gave me his back, bending suddenly over some real or pretended work. "I read some—first day. Since dat time I give 'em to old woman—wash han'—go to work ag'in—naw use."

"Ah! no use?" piped up the soft-voiced wife. "I use them to lighd those fire to coog those soup." But I felt the absence of her accustomed laugh.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Well, it's there whenever you want it," I said to the husband as I was leaving.

"What?" The tone of the response was harsh. "What is where?"

"Why, the money. It's in the bank."

"Hah!" he said, with a contemptuous smile and finished with his thumb. That was the first time I ever saw a thumb swear. But in a moment his kindly gravity was on him again and he said, "Daz all right; I come git her some doze day'."

I did not get back to New Orleans till late in the fall. In the office they told me that Manouvrier had been in twice to see if I had returned, and they had promised to send him word of my arrival. But I said no, and went to see him.

I found new lines of care on his brow, but the old kindness was still in his eye. We exchanged a few words of greeting and inquiry, and then there came a pause, which I broke.

"Well, stuffing birds better than ever, I suppose."

"Naw," he looked around upon his work, "I dawn't thing. I dunno if I stoff him quite so good like biffo'." Another pause. Then, "I thing I mek out what I do wid doze money now."

"Indeed," said I, and noticed that his face was averted from his wife.

She lifted her eyes to his broad back with a quizzical smile, glanced at me knowingly, and dropping them again upon her sewing, sighed:

"Ah-bah!" Then she suddenly glanced at me with a pretty laugh and added, "Sinz all that time he dunno what he goin' to make wid it. 'F-he trade with it I thing he don't stoff bird no mo', an' I thing he lose it bis-ide—ha, ha, ha!—an' 'f-he keep it all time lock in doze bank I thing he jiz well not 'ave it." She laughed again.

But he quite ignored her and resumed, as if out of a revery, "Yass, at de las' I mek dat out." And the wife interrupted him in a tone that was like the content of a singing hen.

"I thing it dawn't worth w'ile to leave it to ow chillun, en't it?"

"Ah!" said the husband, entirely to me, "daz de troub'! You see?—we dawn't got some ba-bee'! Dat neveh arrive to her. God know' daz not de fault of us."

"Yass," put in his partner, smiling to her needle, "the good God know' that varrie well." And the pair exchanged a look of dove-like fondness.

"Yass," Manouvrier mused aloud once more, "I thing I buil' my ole woman one fine house."

"Ah! I dawn't want!"

"But yass! Foudre tonnerre! 'ow I goin' spen' 'er else? w'iskee? 'osses? women? w'ad da dev'l! Naw, I buil' a fine 'ouse. You see! she want dat 'ouse bad enough w'en she see 'er. Yass; fifty t'ousan' dollah faw house and twanny-five t'ousan'"—he whisked his thumb at me and I said for him,

"Yes, twenty-five thousand at interest to keep up the establishment."

"Yass. Den if Pastropbon go first to dat boneyard—" And out went his thumb again, while his hairy lip curled at the grim prospect of beating Fate the second time, and as badly, in the cemetery, as the first time, in the lottery.

He built the house—farther down town and much farther from the river. Both husband and wife found a daily delight in watching its slow rise and progress. In the room behind the shop he still plied his art and she her needle as they had done all their married life, with never an inroad upon their accustomed hours except the calls of the shop itself; but on every golden morning of that luxurious summer-land, for a little while before the carpenters and plasterers arrived and dragged off their coats, the pair spent a few moments wandering through and about the building together, she with her hen-like crooning, he with his unsmiling face.

Yet they never showed the faintest desire to see the end. The contractor dawdled by the month. I never saw such dillydallying. They only silently abetted it, and when once he brought an absurd and unasked-for excuse to the taxidermist's shop, its proprietor said—first shutting the door between them and the wife in the inner room:

"Tek yo' time. Mo' sloweh she grow, mo' longeh she stan'."

I doubt that either Manouvrier or his

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

wife hinted to the other the true reason for their apathy. But I guessed it, only too easily, and felt its pang. It was that with the occupancy and care of the house must begin the wife's absence from her old seat beside her husband at his work.

Another thing troubled me. I did persuade him to put fittings into his cistern which fire-engines could use in case of emergency, but he would not insure the building.

"Naw! Luck bring me dat—I let luck take care of 'er."

"Ah! yass," chimed the wife, "Yed still I thing mebbee the good God tell luck where to bring 'er. I'm shoe 'e got fing-er in that pie."

"Ah-ha? Daz all right! 'f God want to burn his own fing-er——"

At length the house was finished and was beautiful within and without. It was of two and a half stories, broad and with many rooms. Two spacious halls crossed each other, and there were wide verandas front and back, and a finished and latticed basement. The basement and the entire grounds, except a few bright flower-borders, were flagged, as was also the sidewalk, with the manufactured stone which in that nearly frostless climate makes such a perfect and beautiful pavement, and on this fair surface fell the large shadows of laburnum, myrtle, orange, oleander, sweet-olive, mespelus and banana, which the taxidermist had not spared expense to transplant here in the leafy prime of their full growth.

Then almost as dilatorily the dwelling was furnished. In this the brother-in-law's widow co-operated, and when it was completed Manouvrier suggested her living in it a few days so that his wife might herself move in as leisurely as she chose. And six months later, there, in the old back room in St. Peter Street, the wife still sat sewing and now and then saying small, wise, dispassionate things to temper the warmth of her partner's more artistic emotions. Every fair day, about the hour of sunset, they went to see the new house. It was plain they loved it; loved it only less than their old life; but only the deceased brother-in-law's widow lived in it.

I happened about this time to be acting temporarily as president of an insurance company on Canal Street. Summer was coming in again. One hot sunny day, when the wind was high and gusty, the secretary was remarking to me what sad ruin it might work if fire should start among the frame tenement cottages which made up so many neighborhoods that were destitute of water-mains, when right at our ear the gong sounded for just such a region and presently engine after engine came thundering and smoking by our open windows. Fire had broken out in the street where Manouvrier's new house stood, four squares from that house, but straight to windward of it.

We knew only too well, without being there to witness, that our firemen would find nothing with which to fight the flames except a few shallow wells of surface water and the wooden rain-water cisterns above ground, and that both these sources were virtually worthless owing to a drouth. A man came in and sat telling me of his new device for lessening the risks of fire.

"Where?" asked I, quickly.

"Why, as I was saying, on steamboats loaded with cotton."

"Oh, yes," said I, "I understand." But I did not. For the life of me I couldn't make sense of what he said. I kept my eyes laboriously in his face, but all I could see was a vision of burning cottages; hook-and-ladder-men pulling down sheds and fences; ruined cisterns letting just enough water into door-yards and street-gutters to make sloppy walking; fire-engines standing idle and dropping cinders into their own puddles in a kind of shame for their little worth; here and there one furiously sucking at an exhausted well while its firemen stood with scorching faces holding the nozzles almost in the flames and cursing the stream of dribbling mud that fell short of their gallant endeavor. I seemed to see streets populous with the sensation-seeking crowd; sidewalks and alleys filled with bedding, chairs, bureaus, baskets of crockery and calico clothing with lamps spilling into them, cheap looking-glasses unexpectedly answering your eye with the boldness of an outcast girl, broken tables, pictures of the Virgin,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

over-turned stoves, and all the dear mantlepiece trash which but an hour before had been the pride of the toiling house-wife, and the adornment of the laborer's home.

"Where can I see this apparatus?" I asked my patient interviewer.

"Well—ahem! it isn't what you'd call an apparatus, exactly. I have here—"

"Yes; never mind that just now; I'm satisfied you've got a good thing and—I'll tell you! Can you come in to-morrow at this hour? Good! I wish you would! Well, good-day."

The secretary was waiting to speak to me. The fire, he said, had entirely burned up one square and was half through a second. "By the way, isn't that the street where old P. T. B.——"

"Yes," I replied, taking my hat; "if anyone wants to see me, you'd better tell him to call to-morrow."

I found the shop in St. Peter's Street shut, and went on to the new residence. As I came near it, its beauty seemed to me to have consciously increased under the threatenings of destruction.

In the front gate stood the brother-in-law's widow, full of gestures and distressful smiles as she leaned out with nervously folded arms and looked up and down the street. "Manouvrier? he is ad the fire sinz a whole hour. He will break his heart if dat fire ketch to dat 'ouse here. He cannot know 'ow 'tis in danger! Ah! sen' him word? I sen' him fo' five time'—he sen' back I stay righd there an' not touch nut'n'! Ah! my God! I fine dat varrie te-deous, me, yass!"

"Is his wife with him?"

"Assuredly! You see, dey git 'fraid 'bout dat 'ouse of de Sister', you know?"

"No, where is it?"

"No? You dunno dat lill' 'ouse where de Sister' keep dose orphelin' ba-bee'—juz big-inning sinse 'bout two week' ago—round de corner—one square mo' down town—'alf square mo' nearer the swamp? Well, I thing 'f you pass yondeh you fine Pastropbon."

Through smoke, under falling cinders, and by distracted and fleeing households I went. The moment I turned the second corner I espied the house. It was already half a square from the on-coming fire, but on the northern side of the street, just out of its probable track and not in great danger except from sparks. But it was old and roofed with shingles; a decrepit Creole cottage sitting under dense cedars in a tangle of rose and honey-suckle vines, and strangely beautified by a flood of smoke-dimmed yellow sunlight.

As I hurried forward, several men and boys came from the opposite direction at a run and an engine followed jouncing and tilting across the sidewalk opposite the little asylum, into a yard, to draw from a fresh well. Their leader was a sight that drew all eyes. He was coatless and hatless, his thin cotton shirt, with its sleeves rolled up to the elbows, was torn almost off his shaggy breast, his trousers were drenched with water and a rude bandage round his head was soaked with blood. He carried an axe. The throng shut him from my sight, but I ran to the spot and saw him again standing before the engine horses with his back close to their heads. A strong, high board fence shut them off from the well and against it stood the owner of the property, pale as death, guarding the precious water with a shot-gun at full cock. I heard him say:

"The first fellow' that touches this fence——"

But he did not finish. Quicker than his gun could flash and bang harmlessly in the air the man before him had dropped the axe and leaped upon him with the roar of a lion. The empty gun flew one way and its owner another and almost before either struck the ground the axe was swinging and crashing into the fence.

As presently the engine rolled through the gap and shouting men backed her to the edge of the well, the big axeman paused to wipe the streaming sweat from his begrimed face with his arm. I clutched him.

"Manouvrier!"

A smile of recognition shone for an instant and vanished as I added,

"Come to your own house! Come, you can't save it here."

He turned a quick, wild look at the fire, seized me by the arm and with a gaze of deepest gratitude, asked:

"You tryin' save 'er?"

"I'll do anything I can."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Oh, dass right!" His face was full of mingled joy and pain. "You go yondeh—mek you' possible!" We were hurrying to the street—"Oh, yass, faw God's sake go, mek you' possible!"

"But, Manouvrier, you must come too! Where's your wife? The chief danger to your house isn't here, it's where the fire's between it and the wind!"

His answer was a look of anguish. "Good God! my fran'. We come yondeh so quick we can! But—foudre tonnerre!—look that 'ouse here fill' with ba-bee'! What we goin' do? Those Sister' can't climb on roof with bocket' wateh. You see I got 'alf dozen boy' up yondeh; 'f I go 'way they dis-cend an' run h-off ad the fire, spark' fall on roof an'—" his thumb flew out.

"Sparks! Heavens! Manouvrier, your house is in the path of the *flames!*"

The man flew at me and hung over me, his strong locks shaking, his great black fist uplifted and the only tears in his eyes I ever saw there. "Damnession! She's not mine! I trade 'er to God faw these one! Go! tell 'im she's his, he kin burn 'er 'f he feel like!" He gave a half laugh, fresh witness of his distress and went into the gate of the asylum.

I smiled—what could I do?—and was turning away, when I saw the chief of the fire department. It took but one moment to tell him my want, and in another he had put the cottage roof under the charge of four of his men with instructions not to leave it till the danger was past or the house burning. The engine near us had drawn the well dry and was coming away. He met it, pointed to where, beneath swirling billows of black smoke, the pretty gable of the taxidermist's house shone like a white sail against a thundercloud, gave orders and disappeared.

The street was filling with people. A row of cottages across the way was being emptied. The crackling flames were but half a square from Manouvrier's house. I called him once more to come. He waved his hand kindly to imply that he knew what I had done. He and his wife were in the Sister's front garden walk conversing eagerly with the Mother Superior. They neared the gate. Suddenly the Mother Superior went back, the lay Sister guarding the gate let the pair out and the three of us hurried off together.

We found ourselves now in the uproar and vortex of the struggle. Only at intervals could we take our attention from the turmoil that impeded or threatened us, to glance forward at the white gable or back—as Manouvrier persisted in doing—to the Sister's cottage. Once I looked behind and noticed, what I was loath to tell, that the firemen on its roof had grown busy; but as I was about to risk the truth, the husband and wife, glancing at their own roof, in one breath groaned aloud. Its gleaming gable had begun to smoke.

"Ah! dad good God 'ave pity on 'uz!" cried the wife, in tears, but as she started to run forward I caught her arm and bade her look again. A strong, white stream of water was falling on the smoking spot and it smoked no more.

The next minute, with scores of others, choking and blinded with the smoke, we were flying from the fire. The wind had turned.

"It is only a gust," I cried, "it will swing round again. We must turn the next corner and reach the house from the far side." I glanced back to see why my companions lagged and lo! they had vanished.

I reached the house just in time to save its front grounds from the invasion of the rabble. The wind had not turned back again. The brother-in-law's widow was offering prayers of thanksgiving. The cisterns were empty and the garden stood glistening in the afternoon sun like a May queen drenched in tears; but the lovely spot was saved.

I left its custodian at an upper window, looking out upon the fire, and started once more to find my friends. Half-way round to the Sister's cottage I met them. With many others I stepped aside to make a clear way for the procession they headed. The sweet, clean wife bore in her arms an infant; the tattered, sooty, bloody-headed husband bore two; and after them, by pairs and hand in hand, with one gray sister in the rear, came a score or more of pink-frocked, motherless little girls. An amused rabble of children and lads hovered about the diminutive column,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with leers and jests and happy antics, and the wife smiled foolishly and burned red with her embarrassment; but in the taxidermist's face shone an exaltation of soul greater than any I had ever seen. I felt too petty for such a moment and hoped he would go by without seeing me; but he smiled an altogether new smile and said,

"My fran', God A'mighty, he know a good bargain well as anybody!"

I ran ahead with no more shame of the crowd than Zaccheus of old. I threw open the gate, bounded up the steps and spread wide the door. In the hall, the widow, knowing naught of this, met me with wet eyes crying,

"Ah! ah! de 'ouse of de orphelin' is juz blaze' up h-all over h-at once!" and hushed in amazement as the procession entered the gate.

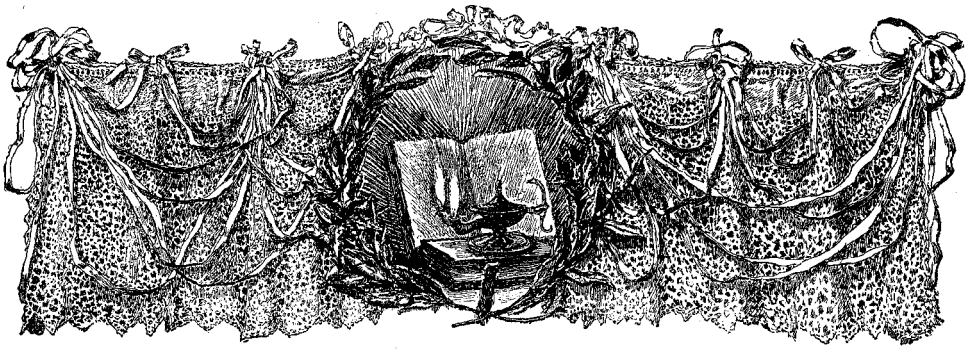
P. T. B. Manouvrier, Taxidermist!

When the fire was out the owner of that sign went back to his shop and to his work, and his wife sat by him sewing as before. But the orphans stayed in their new and better home. Two or three years ago the Sisters—the brother-in-law's widow is one of them—built a large addition behind; but the house itself stands in the beauty in which it stood on that day of destruction, and my friend always leaves his work on balmy afternoons in time to go with his wife and see that pink procession, four times as long now as it was that day, march out the gate and down the street for its daily walk.

"Ah! Pastropbon, we got ba-bee' enough presently, en't it?"

"Ole woman, nobody else ever strock dad lott'ree for such a prize like dat."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



THE POINT OF VIEW

Of the evidences both of intellectual progress and material achievement which are to be brought together this year in the great exposition at Chicago, a representative number of an American magazine may be not the least in interest. In order that it shall show to what these popular mediums of literary and artistic enjoyment and information have grown, it is not necessary that it shall be an ideal number, or that it shall satisfy every criticism. It may almost be said that *any* issue of one of the larger periodicals which its conductors would be willing to put forth might be confidently used as a proof of progress which, if we look back twenty years, seems little less than marvellous; but feeling that an issue intended especially as their "exhibit" should not only show the literary, artistic, and mechanical resources that have come to be employed in such a publication, but should be as fully as it can representative of the individual writers who have made its existence possible, the Conductors of Scribner's Magazine have taken special pains to bring together in this Exhibition Number those in whose work the public of its readers is especially interested. That there are some absentees is unavoidable; but it is believed that the list of those who have contributed to make up these pages more than fulfils its design, and may legitimately and with a very pardonable pride be considered an important representation not merely of what is ephemeral, but of actual contemporary literature at its best, if in its briefer forms.

It is common to hear the task of the Editors of a Magazine talked of as though it consisted altogether of a selection among masterpieces; and criticism upon a publication appearing twelve times a year is apparently often based on the supposition that at least one great literary work is produced every four weeks. It is a supposition which history hardly upholds, and somewhat humbler expectations must continue to accompany even the highest aims of the most sanguine editor. Yet it is certainly not too much to say not only that, as has been many times affirmed, the literature brought together by the magazines to-day is of a genuineness and quality unthought of in older publications addressed to the same audience, but that almost no real masterpiece, even in the highest and most fastidious sense, does actually appear without an earnest effort by the magazines to secure it in whole or in part. It may be fairly said, in short, that in spite of occasional accusations to the contrary, there is no good work in literature or art which is now excluded from their field by any fear lest it be lost upon their readers, and little which any author would hesitate to confide to them because (as he might once have believed) a publication lost in dignity through this form of presentation to a popular audience.

That such a public of magazine readers has grown up in within the last quarter of a century is something in which every American may find one of his sources of pride at this year's celebration. How it

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and the periodicals it has sustained have mutually affected each other may fairly remain, and indeed should remain, an open question; but any periodical which may reasonably claim to be a consequence of this relation is an "exhibit" of real interest in the great Exposition of our progress.

THE pictorial side of this number of the MAGAZINE has sought to be not less widely representative than the literary. Among its contributors are illustrators and painters in France, England, and America. Aside from the illustration of the text—such as Mr. Blum's drawings for his own notes on the artistic aspects of Japan, or Mr. Frost's admirably felt and characteristic studies of vanishing American types—a number of plates, the chosen contributions of the artists unrestrained by the guidance of the writer, make a feature of uncommon interest and importance.

M. Boutet de Monvel's "Study Hour" is one of his happiest successes, and it is very happily reproduced—its delicacy of handling and its breadth of treatment (two things rarely combined as homogeneously as Monvel combines them) thoroughly respected and adequately repeated. The picture is a summary of Monvel's admirable qualities, absolutely pictorial on the one hand and, on the other, in its suggestion eloquent of the high breeding and intellectual fastidiousness that everyone who is familiar with his work associates with Monvel's signature. Admirable colorist as he is, Monvel is even more distinguished perhaps in black and white—at least in the exquisite demi-tint that he affects and that furnishes him such an excellent medium of expression. Altogether in another sphere of pictorial effort is Marchetti's aristocratic drawing entitled "A Song of Springtime." Marchetti is a less original artist than Monvel, it may be, but he is clearly in the line of the true tradition. He has a Fortuny-like sensitiveness to chance and transitory effects of sunlight and shadow and reflection, and is extremely clever in noting and recording them. The elegancies and charming details that he either observes or invents are conspicuous in this delightful plate, which might appropriately be an illustration of one of De Musset's poetical comedies, but which is really too complete a work in itself to need the re-enforcement of any text. Very much the same may be said of Albert Lynch's "A Playmate." Lynch is, in the estimation of many amateurs, the very first of French illustrators. More than any other, perhaps, he succeeds in giving the sense of an almost photographic reality to his pictures which at the same time never lose their imaginative charm. His art has in the highest degree a literary, almost a philosophic, interest, while firmly retaining its pictorial quality. One perceives that he has thought about, as well as observed, the phenomena that he reproduces and arranges to such effective purpose. His pictorial commentary, as it may justly be called, upon Guy de Maupassant's "Pierre et Jean" was as real, as moving, as impressive as the text itself. And the plate here given discloses his force as a painter, his fondness for the decorative aspect of things, as well as anything that he has done, while setting forth with equal force his unusual faculty for crystallizing, so to say, the pictorial impression of a literary subject.

The American contributors to the number's art are at least as successful as the foreign ones. Mr. Weir's "Arcturus" is a novel if not a unique creation. It is in the vein and suggests the fancy, no doubt, of the Renaissance era. But how thoroughly it *is* in this vein, and how frank and free it is, how *personally* sympathetic with the fancy of an elder epoch! Nothing quite like it has been done since Dürer's time, at all events, one may safely say. The figure is beautifully studied, and its decorative accompaniments have the fine air of having been drawn by a competent draughtsman and enthusiastic artist, at play rather than at work—one of the most enjoyable qualities communicable by any artist. Mr. Blashfield's "Florentine Girls" shows his training and his culture, as everything he draws or paints does, and is another instance of the many he has furnished that "style" in art is as attainable in New York as it is in Paris, if one have the faculty to grasp what it really means, and the force to illustrate it. The movement of not only the first but of the second figure in this composition would alone stamp the artist as an appreciative interpreter of the large

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and ample element in nature, and the arrangement, the distribution, the relation of the few simple parts of the whole contribute to a purely ideal *ensemble* in a subtle and yet obvious way that is the painter's own.

In striking contrast to such an example of objective and impersonal art are the plates contributed by Mr. Reinhart, Mr. Smedley, and Mr. Wiles. Each of these is pointedly and piquantly personal. They are evidently the work of the illustrator *par excellence*. They tell you the story as well as pages of print could do. And at the same time they are, as all good illustration is, perfectly pictorial, instead of merely literary. What they represent is depicted as the painter sees it. It is momentary, vivid, actual—not in the least labored or complicated. Mr. Reinhart's "The Coquette" is a picture of importance. In oil, it would belong in a gallery. More than almost anyone of our painters he has the sense of character. One notes in his drawings mental and moral traits, as well as mere physical aspect. He studies people, clearly, as much as their appearance, with the result of presenting to you something humanly as well as pictorially interesting. Mr. Smedley's "Confidences" shows his habitual distinction. He has a patrician touch that endues with elegance whatever he does, slight as the motive may be sometimes. Mr. Wiles's "The Milliner's Bill" is a racy and picturesque bit of *genre*, conceived and presented with characteristic vivacity.

Mr. Mowbray's "The Centaur" and Mr. Church's "The Mirror" contribute idyllic color to the number, the former inspired by Guérin no doubt, and the congenial rendering of an extremely poetic idea to which the management of light and dark gives much technical interest as well—and the latter full of Mr. Church's original and playful but always delicate humor. Mr. Boughton's "The Parting Guest" is an excellent example of his special skill in the delineation of femininity and is redolent of English hedgerows and Mr. Parsons's "Buddha's Flowers" expresses and enforces a simple motive with the utmost technical complexity and resource. "The Heart of the Woods," by Mr. Closson, and "A Quiet Spot," by Mr. Kingsley, illustrate anew and as strikingly as their predecessors in this kind, the talent of these two engravers for the interpretation of natural effects and landscape qualities with as much directness as their art will admit of and without the elaborate intervention of brush or pencil.

A CONTEMPORARY who discourses from day to day with zest and often with wisdom on all topics under the sun, said something the other day about the after-dinner speech. He pointed out how it must not be wholly facetious, nor frivolous, nor silly, nor too long-winded, nor highly exciting, nor overheavy, nor ultra argumentative, nor entirely statistical, nor in the least rancorous, but that it may contain

> Some essential thoughts, some strokes of humor, some scraps of knowledge, some bits of fancy, some sound reasons, some good whims, some green dressing, and a little fat.

He guessed that as many as five thousand after-dinner speeches had been made in New York during the season now closed, and recorded that one man had made ten in a single week and three in one evening. He said he had heard a few tip-top after-dinner speeches, but they must have been a few out of many, for he spoke of hearing a considerable variety of others that for stated reasons were not tip-top. He remarked that a good many men had won renown by making clever after-dinner speeches, and mentioned four distinguished New Yorkers among whom the palm for after-dinner discourse was thought to lie.

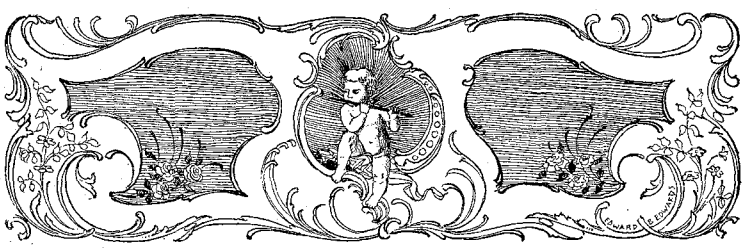
There is no doubt that the after-dinner speech has grown to be an institution of serious magnitude. Its requisites are recognized to be such as the contemporary quoted has set forth. There are certain particular things that ought to go into it, and a lot of others that ought to be kept out. To combine the requisite ingredients so as to produce the proper flavor, and to serve the whole with felicity and grace, is a matter of profound dexterity. Few people ever attain it, and those few do so at a cost that is depressing to consider. The hatful of eyes that are spoiled in teaching an oculist to operate for cataract is more than paralleled by the great cloud of indigestion and petulance which every successful after-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

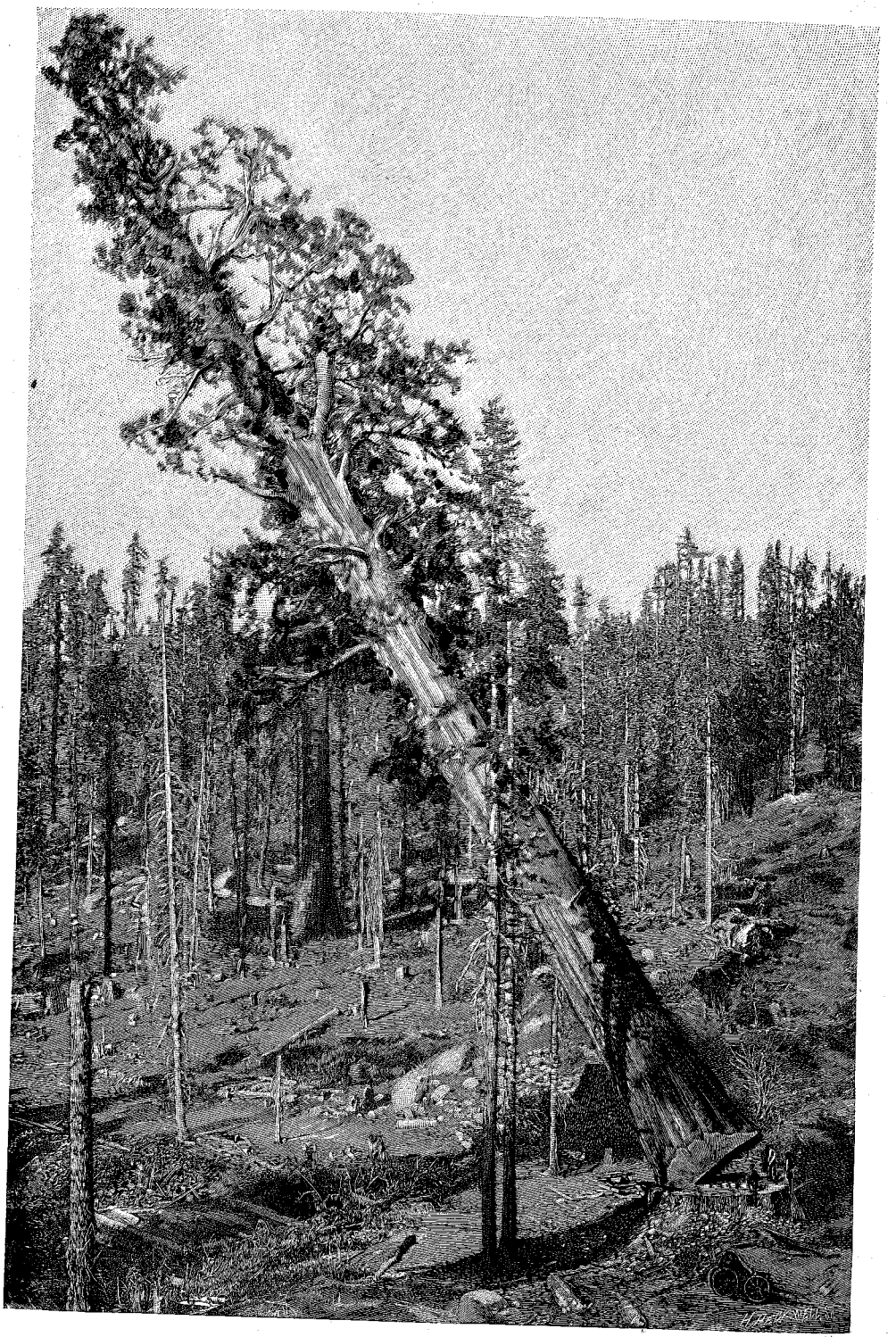
dinner-talker must count as part of the price of his present skill. Not only the man who can attain to a desirable quality of after-dinner deliverance must practise on his fellows in order to learn how, but his eventual success must bear the moral responsibility for the vast burden of mal-appropriate discourse uttered by the multitude, whom no amount of solicitude or practice can ever qualify to stand on their feet after dinner and say right things. If there were less success there would be fewer attempts, and if there were fewer attempts there would be less uneasiness and indigestion.

What can be said, then, as to the moral culpability of a man who, of his mere volition, and without compulsion or reward, would make ten after-dinner speeches in a week, and three in a single evening! Does such a person care nothing for the effect of his example? Is he not his brother's keeper too? Because he can dance on the tight-rope after his meals, has he no scruple about making that sort of exploit popular among gentlemen who are sure to fall on their heads and on ours when they attempt it? It would seem as if this sort of excess ought to be checked; as if something should be done to stem the tide of after-dinner oratory and regulate its flow. It would not do to abolish it altogether, because that is not practicable, and for the further reason that a moderate amount of it of the right sort tends to diminish after-dinner drinking. The men who are to talk are usually careful in their potations, and if they talk well, the men who are to listen may be sufficiently entertained to forego an excessive consumption of champagne. It should, therefore, not be abolished, only regulated. Men are not allowed to preach, or to plead at the bar, or to practice medicine without due preliminary training. If our lives, and our fortunes, and our souls are protected from the unskilful offices of the inexpert, may we not reasonably demand that the same wise guardianship may be extended to our digestions and our livers!

As for the remedy, that is a concern fit to engage the learned faculties. It is enough, and more, for a layman to point out the disease. Yet it suggests itself that a considerable measure of relief might ensue if every intending after-dinner speaker were required to take out a license. Of course such licenses should only be granted to persons of demonstrated competence and due preliminary training; and that such practitioners, like poets and story-tellers, should be remunerated for the exercise of their gifts would naturally follow. The manifold benefits of such a system are obvious. Persons who do not like to make after-dinner speeches, by simply refusing to apply for license, could put themselves under the protection of the law and be free from all the importunities of their friends; while persons who do like to would first have to prove their ability. Fit experts, with the will and the capacity to entertain their brethren after feeding, would receive without embarrassment or impropriety a proper pecuniary recognition of their skill, and thus a new profession would be opened to the unemployed.



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



ENGRAVED BY H. W. PECKWELL.

THE FALL OF A GIANT REDWOOD.

(From an instantaneous photograph taken in a California Lumber Camp. Height of tree, 276 feet; circumference at base, 90 feet.)

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED